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[EDWARD BRUCE DISCOVERS JOANNA.]

MES. LARKALL'S BOARDING SCHOOL.

By the Author of "Man and His Idol."

CHAPTER XXXI.

MES. LARKALL LEARNS THE TRUTH.

The engineer

Who lays the last stone of his sea-bull tower
It cost him years and years of toil to raise,
And smiling at it, tells the winds and waves
To roar and whistle now—but in a night
Beholds the tempest sporting in its place,
May look aghast—as I did!

Sheridan Knowles.

DURING Mahala's absence in London, Mrs. Larkall had grown decidedly better.

The mysterious attack which had paralyzed both mind and body seemed passing away, and she was able to understand as well as read Gertrude Norman's letter.

It gave her at once great pleasure and severe pain. It was a relief to know that the foolish, reckless, and inconsiderate girl, Gertrude Norman, was safe in a moral as well as general sense. Still, there was much in the tone as well as in the actual words of the letter to startle and alarm.

Why should the young girl have been forbidden under an oath, to keep the motive of her leaving the school a secret?

Mrs. Larkall asked herself this question again and again. She was a woman of the world, and her experience led her to suspect secrerries. That which people conceal is usually, as she well knew, something which it might not redound to their credit to reveal. There may be innocent secrets; but they are the exception rather than the rule.

This the lady well knew, and read in the light of this knowledge the missive was far from satisfactory.

Moreover, what a world of meaning there might be in those earnest, despairing words:

"I have been foolish, not wicked. Take me back while I can use those words. Help me! Save me before it is too late! I have no mother, and if you will not be a mother to me, God help me!"

The face of the woman to whom that appeal was addressed grew white, and her lips were livid as she read it.

"She must be saved!" cried Mrs. Larkall, in a voice broken by emotion; "but how? Can she return to this house? I think not. It would be bad for her, and ruinous to me."

The more she thought over it, the more she felt convinced that this was the right view of the case.

She had already run great risks through this unfortunate affair. People were beginning to point to her establishment as the one among hundreds in the town in which the elopement had taken place, and all sorts of whispers—bred from that leader in the London paper—were flying about. There was nothing which people were not ready to assert, some attacking the morals, some the management of the school, and all "on the very best authority." One-half the town busied itself with the enormities perpetrated by the fabulous "Buttons," the other half descended to that in fashionable boarding-schools the pupils were fed on half-boiled rice accompanied by warm milk-and-water, which caused the rice to expand, and so cheated the claims of hunger!

It was necessary that some bold step should be taken, and Mrs. Larkall was the woman for the emergency.

Indisposed as she was, she betook herself to the boarders' parlour, with Gertrude's letter in her hand.

The apparition of the lady created the greatest astonishment and dismay. Several things were going on under cover of Mrs. Larkall's illness which were of the nature of contraband luxuries.

Fremost in mischief, Lolly Brettle had contrived to smuggle into the school certain stereoscopic slides, of which it is only necessary to say that they were regarded by Midshipman Dicks as "very good." These were being exhibited in one corner. In another, a merry group were roaring with laughter as they gathered round a caricature which the Cuttle Fish was drawing in red-chalk on the back of a fire-screen—representing Mr. Snags at the knees of Mrs. Larkall, in the act of offering her his hand,

heart, and kit. The inditing of a love-letter to some mysterious Marine Parade *flaneur*, supposed to be in the Guards, but in reality a discharged shopman of Swan and Edgar's, occupied Dora Wimble and Rosa Merry, who had been quarrelling for two days as to which of the two he had raised his hat to as the school "serpent" past—it was the expression they used for walking out two-and-two, a species of advertising exercise which all school-girls detest. Finally, the younger girls were carrying on an illicit manufacture of toffy over the fire—using for the purpose a sauceman which one young lady had secreted under her bolster for months, with the connivance of a maid-servant.

It was one of Mrs. Larkall's rules, founded on great experience, not to notice what she did not want to see—at least at the time. Young ladies often discovered, by-and-bye, that she had not been so blind as they supposed on certain occasions, but this was one of the secrets of her potent rule.

On this occasion she sailed into the boarders' parlour oblivious of all that was taking place.

Two or three of the elder girls hurried forward to meet her, with blazing faces, and far from innocent eyes.

"You will be pleased to hear," said Mrs. Larkall, commencing abruptly, "that I have heard from our dear Gertrude, who left us so suddenly—from family affairs. She has been staying in Paris—"

A suppressed "Oh!" went round the room.

Paris is the Elysium of the school-girl: to go there the realization of her heart's wildest dreams.

And was it possible Gertrude Norman was there?

This was what the suppressed "Oh!" expressed. "She is quite well and—happy," Mrs. Larkall proceeded, waving the letter to and fro indifferently; but so that all might see the crisp, foreign paper on which it was written, while no one had a chance of reading a word of it; "but we shall not, I think, have the pleasure of seeing her back at the establishment. I mention this, because I know the dear girl was a favourite, and because, for certain reasons which I am not at liberty to explain, undue importance has been attached to the circumstance of her sudden departure.



sudden, that is, to those not aware of the circumstances preceding it."

"Gertrude is not coming back, ma'am?" asked Lolly Brettle.

"No; I think I may say definitely—no!" returned Mrs. Larkall.

"Not to England, ma'am?" said Dora Wimble.

"Yes! Oh, yes! In fact, she is I believe on the route home."

One question rose to the rosy lips of all the girls.

It could almost be seen hovering there and ready to pop out, yet no one dared to put it into shape.

"Was she married? Was she going to be married?"

That was the twofold form of what all were dying to know. But who could ask Mrs. Larkall such a question? To those young, budding, innocent girls marriage was supposed to be an undreamed-of mystery, and the word "husband" was out of the boarding-school vocabulary.

So the lady retired unquestioned; but with a gracious smile upon her face which showed that she regarded the friendly communication she had been able to make as rather a stroke of policy.

It is not a dignified thing to play the listener, and Mrs. Larkall scorned all petty meannesses; but had she paused as she closed the door, she would have taken away a more correct impression than she had of the verdict of the boarders'-parlour on the elopement question.

Lolly Brettle was the first to break the dead silence which prevailed.

"I'm still of the same opinion," remarked this audacious young lady, screwing her mouth up into its most wicked and provoking shape.

"What opinion are you still of?" demanded Vestris, as they called Rose Merry of the alabaster shoulders.

"Why, that it was an elopement after all."

"Oh, I hope so!" cried Dora Wimble, "it is so nice to be able to say that it happened in our school, isn't it? I shall be so disappointed if it turns out to be nothing after all. I hate your hum-drumb family arrangements, there's no romance about them, not a bit."

"And do you think Mrs. Larkall knew of it, and is trying to hush it up?" asked Rose, keeping Lolly to the point.

"I do."

"But, dear, who could be? I can't imagine who. Nobody ever cared for her, at least nobody that I would have run away with," said Rose.

The spiteful Cuttle Fish looked up sharply.

"And nobody who was at all likely to run away with you," she sneered.

"Oh, as to that," cried Rose, colouring and tossing her pretty head, "you'd have Snagg himself, if he were to ask you."

"Indeed! Well, Snagg wouldn't have you if you were to ask him," retorted the little spitfire.

Lolly Brettle interposed.

"Girls, girls," she said, "don't let's show it, if we are hurt. I should have thought that whoever it is, might have made a better choice than Mrs. Larkall's pauper; but, I don't go about saying the grapes are sour. I tell you what we must do. We must set Mahala to work to find out all about it for us. I'd give anything to unravel the mystery, and she'll do it, if anybody can. And now, you children,"—this was to the young girls who had resumed their place over the fire—"about that taffy?"

The contraband luxury was produced, for the younger pupils were in mortal terror of the great girls, and soon the whole room was absorbed over it. Yes, for the boarding-school girl is a strange compound, at once shrewd and childish, sharp beyond her years and weak beyond the weakness of her sex, romping, languishing, given up to romance and appetite, dying for love, and with a consuming passion for sweet-stuff.

As Mrs. Larkall left the boarders'-parlour, and before the smile had died out of her face, Mahala suddenly appeared, having just returned from town.

The syah's account of what had passed at Mr. Dyott's office, greatly astonished Mrs. Larkall. She would scarcely believe that the man who had written to her so confidentially and so kindly as her old friend Martin Leveson, was an impostor. Yet, what other conclusion could she come to, when Mahala, in glowing and enthusiastic terms, with eyes all aglow, and face beaming with animation, described her recognition of the youth she had known in India.

"You are sure it was our little Martin?" urged Mrs. Larkall.

"Oh, certain. He is much altered; but I'm not, and he knew me before I knew him."

Nothing could be more satisfactory, yet the lady did not feel satisfied. Something was going on wrong. There must be villainy in some quarter. Of that there could be no doubt, and the only question was, how it was to be laid bare? One thing Mrs. Larkall resolved on, that was to go to town at the earliest moment and have an interview with Mr. Dyott, and also with

Roland Hernshaw. To both of these gentlemen she immediately wrote, informing them of the news of Gertrude; she also penned a kind but judicious note to that young truant, who had given her address at Rouen, imploring her to return to England at once, promising that no questions should be asked, and giving an address at which she might obtain a lodgment in London.

Those letters Mahala undertook to put in the post-bag which hung in the hall, locked, and of which the lady of the house had the key, now entrusted to her ayah.

Mahala executed the commission; but she first drew from her bosom—in which she appeared to carry everything she possessed—a large envelope, already stamped and addressed, and into this she thrust the three letters. Then she put the envelope into the post-bag.

The result of this manœuvre was that all Mrs. Larkall's letters went direct to "R. Hernshaw, Esq., South Audley Street, Grosvenor Square, W."

It might have been the fatigue of writing, or perhaps agitation of mind simply, but certainly Mrs. Larkall had a relapse within an hour of Mahala's return. For two days she was so indisposed that she could attend to no business, and travelling was out of the question. The ayah expressed the deepest sorrow, but every evening at a certain hour she slipped out and went round to the telegraph office. On the third evening she came away with a crisp piece of tissue-paper in her hands, and stopping under a lamp, read the words written on it as if with a greasy pencil. They were very simple.

"Stop the p."

That was the entire telegraphic message.

From that hour Mrs. Larkall grew better.

She was speedily well enough to undertake a journey to London to meet Gertrude, and on going accepted the hospitality of Mr. Roland Hernshaw, at South Audley Street.

It was evening when she arrived there, about seven o'clock, the hour at which Roland dined, and the night of the house, in conjunction with the exquisite nature of the dinner, went far to dissipate those doubts, fears, and apprehensions which the lady had entertained respecting her friend.

The dinner was perfection. It was merely a *tête-à-tête* repast, as it is called, in other words, a dinner for two; but Roland's French cook had exerted himself, by special order, as assiduously as if a grand banquet had been given. Everything was of the most rare and delicate order. Though only March, the delicacies of summer had been anticipated. The *éperges* were crowned with the roses of June—forced, of course—blending with the choices white camellias. What the dishes comprised it would be impossible to state; but the vegetables were asparagus at a guinea a bundle and peas at two guineas the pint. The dessert was absolutely autumnal; strawberries, cherries, currants, and grapes were served on Sèvres china, worth its weight in gold; and conspicuous was the famous pear, the *belle angevine*, at a guinea a-piece. The wines, Mrs. Larkall, being an invalid, scarcely touched, but they were beyond price, even including, as Roland said, and the lady could not contradict, the famous Cabinet Johannisberg—the wine of the world.

As they sat together over dessert, it was natural that their talk should be of Gertrude Norman, her great fortune and her recent escape.

Mrs. Larkall related the particulars of both.

The host listened with the utmost interest to the narrative, and it was not till the lady had finished that he said:

"While I congratulate Gertrude upon her good fortune, there is one reason why I am sorry that I have come to hear of it."

"Indeed! What is that?"

"It is because I'm afraid that my motives in what I'm about to say will be misconstrued. You're aware, Mrs. Larkall, that Miss Norman made a strong impression upon me from my first introduction, and that I have visited her, I suppose I may say, in the capacity of a suitor?"

"Clearly so."

"At that time I knew nothing of her good fortune—I cared to know nothing of it; and I must appeal to you to free me from the reproach of having been influenced by mercenary motives in what I have done."

The lady bowed.

"That I am about to act from motives as pure and disinterested, I must throw myself on your generosity to believe. The fact is, Mrs. Larkall, I love Gertrude, and I believe, in spite of what has happened, that she is devotedly attached to me."

"I always thought so," returned Mrs. Larkall; "but if so, how do you account for her extraordinary conduct in quitting my establishment, I can hardly venture to hope, alone?"

"I can account for it," said Roland, cautiously, and watching the effect of his words out of the depths of

his blue eyes; "because I am to an extent in her confidence."

"Indeed!"

"To an extent—mark me—only to an extent; but what I have accidentally learned, supplies me with a motive for her flight which—which I some day hope to be in a position to impart to you."

Mrs. Larkall did not like the tone of that remark.

She had been far from impressed with the young man's manner that day. He was altered, though she could hardly tell how. There was an air about him she had never noticed before—an air of triumph it might be called—as if in the pride of his own self-conceit he was prepared to carry all before him.

Perhaps, also, the lady was annoyed that he, almost a stranger, should be in possession of a secret with which she had not been entrusted. So she returned a cold, guarded answer to Roland's remark. He noticed it, but went on in the same confident tone in which he had commenced.

"Meanwhile," he said, "I have thought over the position in which Gertrude will be placed, and have come to the conclusion that she cannot return to the school."

"I also have come to that conclusion," said Mrs. Larkall.

"Have you, now? So far, that is capital. If you only consent to what I have further to propose I shall, indeed, be happy. In a word, Mrs. Larkall, I propose, with your consent, to marry Miss Norman."

Mrs. Larkall looked at the man with a firm, searching glance.

"Yes—well, yes—some day, p'raps —," she faltered.

Roland waved his right hand to and fro with an impatient movement.

"No," he said. "I mean at once and without delay."

"But why this haste?" asked the lady, still trying to read those inscrutable blue eyes and the secret of that face which, fresh, and smooth, and rosy as a boy's, hid, like a mask, the character of the man.

"Why, my dear madam!" he exclaimed, half-contemptuously, "isn't the reason obvious? This young woman has taken such a step as no woman takes with impunity. She has run away—that is the English of it. She's gone off in the night from her home, nobody knows where, or with whom, though half the world will be ready enough to say for what purpose. By that act she has ruined herself in the estimation of every right-thinking person. You know that. You know well enough, that with all the liberty and license which a girl apparently enjoys in this country, there are things which she must not, dare not do; steps which, if she once takes, she forfeits character, position, everything. Now, this girl has overstepped the forbidden line, taken one false step, and surely it is not for a woman of your experience to ask why it is essential that such remedy as can be adopted should be adopted at once?"

"There is some truth in this," said Mrs. Larkall.

"Some truth! By Jove you'll find it is the solemn, awkward truth, such as there's no getting over. Let Gertrude marry now, and the scandal will be swallowed up in the *début* of the marriage. Let her wait a month, and I wouldn't give that for her chance of redeeming her position."

He snapped his fingers as he spoke, and swayed round in his chair as if the point was settled.

But he was mistaken.

Mrs. Larkall was a woman of the world. She had seen a good deal of life under all its phases, and was cautious and discriminating to an unusual extent. And while Roland had been speaking, two processes had been going on in her mind. She had listened to him with half her brains, and sat in judgment on him with the other half.

"Let us hope that the case is not so very desperate," she said, with a smile.

"But it is, madam, it is. What's the use of hoping in the face of facts?"

"You seem to have forgotten one point," the lady urged, very slowly and cautiously, and without removing those eyes, which were beginning to make the host very uncomfortable; "you have overlooked the fact that Gertrude is now an heiress under Mr. Protheroe's will, and a hundred thousand pounds is a great beautee."

"Pshaw!"

"A great healer of broken—I would rather say chipped—reputations."

"You are so mercenary, Mrs. Larkall," said Roland, impatiently.

"And you are not, Mr. Hernshaw?"

There was not much in those words, and they were said very quietly. Yet they brought the person to whom they were addressed, and who was half leaning on the back of his chair, face to face with the speaker in an instant.

"What do you mean?" he demanded.

"Oh, land, bitter Norman's—
"Rather Larkall—
"The fat the trade was
"the tone that
"trust her
"Espe—
"Larkall—
"sentence.
"mit affair
"which I have
"One them, who
"never be
"purposes.
"So, as he
"he snatch
"You arms on
"across it.
"I do.
"Just And he
"What I tell
"have take
"Mrs. Larkall—
"She has chattered
"I—I
"Never
"He put
"wood chaf
"You
"Mrs. Lar
"never
"equipped
"was an
"diplomat
"his own
"England
"born with
"my way
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"I leave
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"it, scene
"You him

"Oh," cried Mrs. Larkall laughing—she could laugh now, though in very bitterness of soul, for in that action of his she had read Mr. Hernshaw's motive, "simply that you are too romantic and chivalric, and all that kind of thing. But then you are young, and the young are always, or should be always, ingenuous and impulsive. But see what this impulsiveness might lead you into. Here are you coolly proposing to sacrifice yourself purely for the sake of saving my orphan pupil's reputation. No! I couldn't permit it. Indeed, I couldn't. You might regret this hasty step in a month, and then you would overwhelm me with repreaches. No, my dear sir, let us proceed as we have commenced. Let Gertrude take up her residence in town with friends of mine, receive you as before among other friends, and if she still prefers you, and can offer any explanation of her recent conduct, which can satisfy you and myself that it was quite irreproachable, then—then I will consider your claims as a suitor."

"Oh, madam, you have gone too far," replied Roland, bitterly. "I have already been received as Miss Norman's suitor at your house!"

"Rather as her father's friend, I think," said Mrs. Larkall.

"The fact is," cried Roland, thrown off his guard by the tone the conversation was assuming, "when Gertrude was penniless, you were only too glad to get her introduced to a man who might probably make a lady of her: now she is an heiress, you think it right to play your cards differently."

"There is a good deal of truth in that," said the lady, with perfect calmness.

"What?"

"Oh, it is of little use for us to play at deceiving one another. I am a woman of the world, and stand in the relation—the accidental relation—of a mother to Gertrude Norman. I feel bound to act for her as I would for my own child; and something, I hardly know what, tells me that I should not be wise to trust her at once, and without inquiry, to your care."

"Especially since she is an heiress, and nota beggar in want of a home," sneered Hernshaw.

"Especially since she is an heiress," repeated Mrs. Larkall—but she did not suffer herself to finish the sentence. "We will, therefore, if you please, permit affairs to return to their original position, and though I feel flattered by your offer and its motive, which I hope I don't misconstrue, I shall feel bound to withhold my consent for the present."

Somewhat, neither of the speakers well knew how, but the conversation had drifted into a very awkward stage. Roland could not tell how he had contrived to spoil his position; Mrs. Larkall was ignorant of the causes which had led her instinctively to doubt this man, and to show that she doubted him.

One thing was clear: there was a rupture between them, which Hernshaw saw, plain enough, could never be healed—certainly not in time to serve his purposes.

So, as it was useless to keep on the mask any longer, he snatched it off at once.

"You refuse my proposal?" he said, folding his arms on the edge of the table, and looking fiercely across it.

"I do."

"Just so. I've been prepared for this."

And he rose.

"What?" cried Mrs. Larkall.

"I tell you I expected some such folly as this, and have taken my measures accordingly."

Mrs. Larkall trembled.

She hardly knew what agitated her, but her teeth chattered, and her limbs grew cold.

"I—I don't understand," she faltered.

"Oh, you will, soon enough," retorted Roland. "Never fear!"

He put one knee on the amber-satin seat of a satin-wood chair, and leaning on the back, swung to and fro, as he said:

"You're an extremely clever woman of the world, Mrs. Larkall, but your sex are never a match for mine—never! Besides, I came into the world pretty well equipped for playing the game of life. My father was an Italian—wily, subtle, and dangerous as a serpent. My mother was the daughter of a Russian diplomatist, whose name has passed into a proverb in his own country for cunning and duplicity. Born in England, the posthumous son of an exiled woman—bora with a price upon my head, and forced to work my way up, not against the common enemy, poverty alone, but against secret, insidious, sleepless enmity—I leave you to judge what my natural qualifications for the life-struggle were, and what opportunities I've had of brightening and polishing them up."

"But, ready—" Mrs. Larkall would have interposed a remark.

The other stopped her.

"Best hear what I've to say, since you must know it, sooner or later, and now is as good a time as any. You hinted just now that I was—well, I will say an

adventurer. You are right. You see, I don't attempt to blink matters now—it is unnecessary as between you and me. Let us say, then, that I am an adventurer—that it was in that character that I obtained an introduction to you, and with a purpose quite in keeping with the character. I came there as I represented, merely as a friend of old Protheroe's, who, bless his heart, I never set eyes on in all my life. Oh, it's a fact!"

"And you'd letters from him to me?"

"Well, I'd rather not stop to explain how I got them. Enough that I did get them, presented them, saw the young lady—whom I had seen often before—won her affections, and—well, I suppose the truth must out—have you ever seen that sort of thing?"

He took from a covered vase on the mantelpiece an oblong piece of paper, and threw it across the table.

Mrs. Larkall caught it up, and her eyes glanced rapidly over it.

The document was in French.

"It is—a marriage certificate!" cried Mrs. Larkall.

"Precisely."

"And this is your signature above that of Gertrude Norman's?"

"Yes."

"You are, then, her husband?"

"The truth to a nicely. My dear madam, you have been maligned. You have had a marriage certificate in your hands before: I shall be ready to believe next that you may have signed one at some odd time or other."

Mrs. Larkall's face was white, not purple, with rage. So indignant, so hurt was she at the trick which had been played on her, that she did not even hear the insulting words which Roland had just addressed to her, or if she did hear them, their meaning was lost in the intensity of her feelings.

"Mr. Hernshaw," she cried at length, "you are an atrocious scoundrel!"

"I have been told so before—but never by fairer lips," he replied, bowing.

"But," cried the irate lady, "though you may gloat over my mortification for the moment, don't suppose that your triumph will last. I will dispute the will rather than Mr. Protheroe's wealth shall come into your hands."

"Pardon me, but you'd best not," said Roland, with a sardonic grin. "There are reasons—if I may be so ungallant as to refer to them—why it would be better that you did not appear in connection with Mr. Protheroe's affairs."

The lady's eyes flashed fire: it was evidently a home-thrust.

"At least," she said, "this marriage must be annulled. And there can be no difficulty about that. It is illegal in every way."

"That may be a question for the lawyers," replied the smiling, insidious, hateful Roland, "the question for you is—how far you will serve the lady's interests by making her the heroine of a public scandal. A divorced woman is held in little esteem by some persons; but one whose maiden reputation—"

He did not finish.

Mrs. Larkall put her hands to her brow, and grieved in anguish of spirit.

Roland Hernshaw stood coolly regarding her, and waiting till the paroxysm had passed over.

When she had somewhat calmed down, he said:

"Is it your pleasure, madam, that we should go in search of my—my wife?"

"No," said the lady rising, with the last effort of crushed dignity and self-command, "she is my shame—my disgrace! From this moment I will never see her more."

She caught her loosely-flowing scarf about her shoulders, and without deigning to turn toward her entertainer, moved straight to the door by a sort of mechanical effort, and so out of the room.

As she disappeared, Roland Hernshaw rang the bell.

Edouard answered.

"Let a Clarence cab be called for that lady," said the master, "and a Hansom for me."

The valet bowed and retired.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE FACE IN THE MOONLIGHT.

Words weaker than your grief would make
Grief more. 'Twere better I should cease,
Although myself could almost take
The place of him that sleeps in peace.

Tempest.

It was the wan ghost of the brave, handsome, high-spirited Edward Bruce that haunted the streets of London, day and night, always on the watch—always looking for some trace of the lost one whose love was necessary to his very existence.

How complete a change a few weeks had wrought in him it was painful to witness.

Roderick Bruce felt that his heart would break at the sight of his noble boy reduced to such a wreck. It was seldom that he came home. He would wander away in the early morning, no one knew where; and often it was far into the night before he returned—starved, jaded, scarcely able to crawl along the streets.

Whatever the hour, the loving father never sought his bed until Edward came; and then he would greet him with an invariable look—quick, sharp, inquiring, followed by a pressure of both hands.

Father and son knew what that meant.

In the eager look Roderick sought to ascertain, what he would not pain his noble boy by asking, the result of that day's search? And in the pressure of the hand there was conveyed a throb of sympathy that could not have been put into words.

Again and again, Roderick Bruce was on the point of confessing to his son all that he knew respecting Amy's disappearance—that is to say, all that Wolff had told him in respect to Roland Hernshaw. But, in the first place, the old man was rigid in his notions of honour and right—he would not do another an injustice even to save his own son; and, more than this, he looked hourly for Wolff's re-appearance.

Little as he could respect, or even trust, that disreputable person, he firmly believed that Wolff spoke his real sentiments when he said:

"Leave the lad to me. I will come here again; and when I do, it will be to take him to Amy."

There was an earnestness about the way in which those words were spoken—so much of the outcast's better nature seemed thrown into them—that Bruce could not doubt the sincerity of his fellow member of the Secret Society of which we have heard. And it was a source of wonder to him that day after day passed, and Wolff did not come, either to keep his promise, or to urge on that other matter between them, and in which he had shown so much excitement and vindictiveness.

What could have become of him?

The boy, too, asked that question; for, in spite of his rough bearing, there was something about Wolff which impressed others with an idea of his sincerity; and Edward Bruce had not doubted but that, sooner or later, he would keep the appointment he had made in the prison. So, though he every day betook himself to the spot named, he every day left it with bitter disappointment; yet, in his heart, he continued to nourish the hope that the ruffian would keep his word, that they should meet, and that he should be conducted to Amy Robert.

Had Roderick Bruce, or his son, known what had happened at Dr. Amphlett's, all his watching and waiting, and disappointment might have been prevented. But who was to give them that information? Of the doctor they knew nothing, and Hernshaw was not at all likely to have disclosed so important a secret, even had he been applied to.

So time went on, heavily enough for all the inmates of the household, and not the least so for the hapless Carla, who tried in vain to forget her own sorrow in the contemplation of that of the youth whom she so desirously loved.

At last, it became pretty clear to Roderick Bruce that the monotony of his son's grief was seriously affecting his health.

There was an unnatural lustre about his eyes, which glared out from dark, cavernous rings; his features were pinched up; and his wasted cheeks were either of a leaden hue, or glowed with an unnatural fire. Day and night he was racked by a fierce cough, and his weakness showed itself in the listless manner in which he dragged his limbs, as he moved always wearily from place to place.

This state of the case did not escape Carla's attention either; and one day, after talking it over with her uncle, she persuaded him to let her write to Lady Robert praying her to invite Edward to spend a week or two at the Towers.

The invitation, warm and cordial as words could make it, or heart could dictate it, speedily came. At first, Edward shrank from such an idea. His habit of wandering, day and night, about the great city was growing upon him, and he felt it impossible to shake it off. After a great effort, however, he succeeded—chiefly, it must be owned, through the entreaties of Carla.

"I will go," he had said, "since you wish it."

"Wish it!"

She could not—the poor, dear child—help throwing a reproachful emphasis into the exclamation. Yet it was like raising the corner of the curtain which hung before her heart-secret—hung there black and impenetrable, never to be raised, so she determined, to his eyes.

The lad was struck with some peculiarity in her tone.

"Don't you wish it?" he asked, tenderly.

"For your sake—yes, oh, yes!" she answered; "but it is lonely here when we are left to ourselves, uncle and I; and—and you will write and let us know how you are getting on, won't you?"

Carla forced a smile into her face as she spoke, and Edward pressed her hand and promised what she asked.

As he left his heart reproached him a little.

"She has more feeling than I thought," he muttered. "I've always accused her of being cold—*praps* she isn't. *Praps* it's only her way. She may love me as well as—as I love her, and a fellow couldn't love a sister more. She's a good girl. I wonder if she's capable of a *tender* feeling for anybody?"

Had he turned and seen the expression of the eyes that watched him from the room he had just quitted, he would not have had long to wait for an answer to his question.

That night Edward departed for the Towers.

It was late when he arrived there, but the night was magnificent. A full moon bathed the landscape in a flood of light, and imparted to it a beauty beyond that of early spring. As Edward approached the old house, he thought it had never looked less beautiful or more desolate. The moonlight lay like water on the grey roof; it brought out into full relief the keep, the gables, the Gothic porch, and the embayed windows; but the greater part of the structure lay in deep shadow. Not a light was visible in any window, and seen from the road, over the long, rotting garden-fence, the place looked as much deserted and as likely to be haunted as ever it had in the old time, when it and its ghosts were held to be in Chancery.

As Edward Bruce walked up the serpentine carriage-road, under the shadow of the evergreens and the skeleton branches of leafless saplings, he could not help contrasting the appearance of the place with that which it had presented on the night he last visited it, when he came bounding along, heart-full of happiness and hope, and joyous anticipation of bliss in store for him.

That night, he remembered, he had thought the old mansion and its surroundings full of romantic beauty.

Beauty!

Where was it? What could it have consisted in? He looked about him in a hopeless endeavour to discover.

"That wretched old, half-finished, half-rotting pile," he muttered half-aloud; "is about the ugliest thing of the sort in creation, I should say. And what on earth made them stick it in the middle of a wilderness? I suppose people used to like damp and mildew, and all the rest of it. A backwoodsman's hut in the middle of a morass is more picturesque and quite as healthy. And I've thought of this place among the palaces of Italy, and persuaded myself that there wasn't one of 'em half so beautiful—infatuation!"

Yes, it was infatuation; that sort of infatuation which is heaven's best gift to the young and happy. It was the infatuation that is born of the heart's tenderest and most delicate susceptibilities, that is coloured by the romance of youth and love, and that once dead is so hard to revive.

The welcome accorded to the young visitor was as cordial as Sir Sydney and Lady Robart could offer.

They had, as we know, sunk under the blow of the loss of their favourite child, and nothing seemed to have power to exhilarate them. One event had served to arouse them from their lethargy in some degree—an event which had occurred that very day—namely, the receipt of a letter from Gertrude Norman, in which, with girlish pride, she had hinted at her marriage with Roland Hernshaw, evidently a forbidden topic; but they were even more moved by the appearance presented by Edward Bruce. They were shocked and dismayed by the ravages which despair had wrought in him. Carla Bruce had prepared them for a change, but not for that which they witnessed. They could hardly credit that this was the young, ardent, impassioned youth who had bounded into the drawing-room on the evening of his return from Italy, brimful of life and joy! This he—this pale, emaciated, apparently dying man? Impossible!

For hours the three bereaved, heart-stricken inmates of the Towers sat conversing, in low, subdued voices and always upon one theme.

It seemed impossible to get away from it.

Lady Robart seeing how painfully the name of her child vibrated upon the heart-strings of the baronet and his guest, tried all that ingenuity and delicacy could suggest to divert their thoughts into other channels; but in vain. Of Amy their hearts were full, and of Amy alone could they discourse.

But in the course of the evening Sir Sydney mentioned the letter they had that day received from Gertrude Norman, and expressed his astonishment at its contents.

"We can hardly imagine that it can be more than a school-girl's boast on the part of Gertrude Norman," said the baronet, "because the attention Roland Hernshaw paid to Amy was most marked. We have forbore to mention it lest it might add to your uneasiness."

They might well have hesitated. Better had they still done so.

At the bare mention of a rival to his affections, the eyes of Edward Bruce glared in their deep sockets with a phosphorescent light; his cheek seemed transparent, and his whole body was convulsed.

"Who is this man?" he asked, in a scarcely audible tone.

"Nay, you must not distress yourself without cause," interrupted Lady Agatha. "We did not imagine for a moment but that you had heard of our friend. He has mentioned your father's name more than once."

"Indeed! they are friends, then?"

"I can hardly say that," replied her ladyship, greatly alarmed at the effects visible in the young man's face. "Mr. Hernshaw is a gentleman of some position, I believe. He was introduced to us, and visited here while Miss Norman stayed here with Amy, during the holidays."

"And he took advantage of your kindness to insult Amy with his offensive advances?" burst out the impetuous youth.

"I can hardly say that," replied Sir Sydney; "that would be going too far. Remember, he did not know that our poor child was engaged, and though he was evidently struck with her, I am not aware that his attentions went beyond those of an ordinary visitor. His admiration showed itself less in attention to Amy than in neglect of Gertrude. Was it not so, Amy?"

"Yes," said the lady, "at the same time I am not surprised to find that he has made Gertrude his wife. She loved him, that was plain, and however he might have yielded to Amy's attractions, it was clear to me that when she was withdrawn from his path, Gertrude's ascendancy over him would be restored. I for one, therefore, am not surprised at the news."

With a woman's tact her ladyship would not admit how much she had been hurt, or what consternation Gertrude's letter had produced. It was, she felt, useless to pain the young man with the knowledge that Amy had ever cared for the adventurer—as she persisted in regarding him—and though her contempt for his conduct in marrying another so soon was very great, she veiled it under the words we have given.

The whole truth, however, could hardly have been more distressing to Edward Bruce. By some intuitive process such as a lover's heart alone could exercise, he detected under the words of these simple folks, the very truth they had attempted to conceal.

It occurred to him now, for the first time, but with as much certainty as if he had heard it from their own lips, that the idolised Amy might have loved another.

The thing was so incredible that at first he scouted it. Yet, the more he came to think over it, the more rational it seemed.

She was but a child, indeed both were mere children when he left England. He had been away some years. During that interval Amy had sprung into womanhood—had seen something of the world—and might have outgrown the childish infatuation which, with him, had ripened into a life's passion.

All this was so rational, so perfectly like what was continually occurring in society, that he marvelled he had never suspected it before.

And now that the truth dashed upon him, what, you will ask, did he do?

Did he prepare himself calmly to relinquish Amy? Did he curse his own folly, or lead her memory with bitter reproaches?

No.

All his thought was of vengeance—blind, fierce, relentless vengeance against the man who had dared to offer her the insult of his attentions, and, as he suspected, to win her sensitive heart in return.

He said little to his host of this feeling.

He screened and smothered, as best he might, the blaze which had sprung up in his breast, contenting himself with such inquiries as enabled him, mentally, to measure swords, as it were, with his antagonist. But when at length he made an excuse for retiring early, his jealous fears, surmises, and recriminations found vent in strong and passionate words.

Of course, he could not sleep.

He shrank from the narrow bed in one corner of the great spectral bed-chamber assigned him, as if from a bier, which it not a little resembled.

"Sleep!" he cried out, impetuously, "I couldn't rest if I were dead in my grave!"

The moonlight streamed in through the uncurtained windows, and made a path of light across the oaken floor.

It looked cool and refreshing. It seemed as if it must soothe that heated brow, and be grateful to those withered, but parched and burning lips.

So Edward Bruce strode to the window and threw it open.

The bedchamber was in the rear of the house, and the ground rose there slanting upward to a hill-top, where it was crowned with a dense clump of firs,

always black and dense, waving like funeral plumes against the sky. From the window to the ground, therefore, was but a few feet, and the young man having gazed out into the garden, now flooded with light, sprang from the window-sill and alighted on a wind-swept pile of crackling, withered leaves.

It might have been fancy, but it seemed to him that the moonlight did cool and soothe him. The throbbing of his aching temples seemed less severe as he walked in it, the beating of his heart less violent.

So, clasping his hands across the back of his head, and pressing the thick locks ruthlessly under his burning palms, he wandered on, and on, indulging his bitter thoughts, and chasing at the delay which must arise before he could wreak his vengeance on the man who had done him this never-to-be-forgiven wrong.

Strangely enough, it did not occur to him that he might have little real cause of complaint against Roland Hernshaw, for anything he really knew. He had leaped to the conclusion that Amy had been won and carried off by this adventurer, and he only longed for vengeance. He would have been astounded could it have been shown him how completely the evidence went against his conclusions. And it is singular to reflect that the boy's instinctive conclusions were right, while those from the evidence would have been incorrect.

Having wandered for a long, long time in the neglected wilderness behind the house, absorbed in his own reflections, Edward Bruce strode, at length, into one of the main paths leading down to the gates in front, and facing the road.

Qwing to the saplings, with which this broad path was lined, it was for the most part in shadow; but here and there were broad gaps in the trees, and, in consequence, patches of light upon the ground.

As he walked slowly along, Edward Bruce chanced to look up, and, as his eyes strained down the path, a singular idea possessed him.

He thought that across one of those patches of intense light there flitted the figure of a woman—if it could be a woman who was so light, so ethereal, so much the colour of the light in which she moved.

The idea lasted but for a second.

When he looked again the apparition was gone.

"Am I mad?" he asked himself, stopping suddenly.

When he stopped, it seemed as if every sound in the garden stopped. The night was very still, and his footsteps on the crackling leaves had alone disturbed the death-like repose. Now they ceased, all ceased.

The falling of a dead leaf was audible.

Not liking to believe himself the victim of a mental hallucination, Edward Bruce waited but a few seconds, then dashed forward with the firm resolve of satisfying himself as to whether there was any reality in the sight which had arrested his attention. For some time he continued in the main path, looking to right and left as he went, but at length the trees grew denser, being more thickly planted, and then he struck off through one of the side openings, that led through a belt of copse, so as to reach an open, unimpeded space.

On passing through this copse Edward came suddenly upon the apparition which had before eluded him—so suddenly, that in a moment, and before he could speak, it was close upon him.

From the dark trunk of a tree, against which it leaned, the figure of a woman rose, uttered a cry, appeared to dilate as if struggling to rise superior to some invisible foe, then fell prostrate at the young man's feet.

A streak of moonlight, stealing through a break in the copse, rested upon the face which lay upturned, and toward which the young man bent as soon as he recovered his momentary consternation.

It was the face of a young woman, very pale and preternaturally wasted, but still retaining traces of singular beauty. Though she was not more than twenty, apparently, there was about this stranger one of the most decided appearances of age.

Her hair was quite white, not as if it had been of any colour, light or dark, which left a tinge upon it—but as if white was its natural hue.

Edward Bruce noticed, too, with alarm that the eyes of the stranger were apparently upturned, like those of one blind.

In reality, the pupils of those eyes were white.

A very little observation showed the young man that the stranger had fainted.

He bent over her for a moment or two, giving himself up to a strange, inexplicable fascination in the singular face, and as he did so the lips slightly moved, and a sound was faintly audible.

With a slight foreign accent, the stranger repeated one word.

"Roland! Roland!" she murmured.

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Edward Bruce started from her: then stood looking down with an incredulous face.

He did not then know that the strange woman, who lay helpless at his feet, was Joanna, the Witch of the Black Forest.

(To be continued.)

SELF-MADE; OR, "OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

By MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,
Author of "The Hidden Hand," "The Lost Heiress," &c. &c.

CHAPTER CIVIL

FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

How deep, how thorough felt the glow,
Of rapture, kindling out of woe!
How exquisite one single drop
Of bliss, that sparkling to the top
Of misery's cup, is keenly quaffed,
Though death must follow soon the draught!

Moore.

THE countess was sitting on one of the arm-chairs near the fire when Claudia led the judge up before her, saying only:

"Lady Hurst-Monceaux, my father."

The countess arose, and held out her hand with a smile of welcome, saying:

"It gives me much joy to see you safe, after all your dangers, Judge Merlin. Pray sit near the fire."

The judge retained her hand in his own for a moment, while he bowed over it and answered:

"I thank you for your kind expressions, dear Lady Hurst-Monceaux. But, oh, what terms shall I find strong enough to thank you for the noble support you have given my daughter in her great need?"

"Believe me, I was very happy to be serviceable to Lady Vincent," replied the countess, gently. Then, turning to Claudia, she said:

"Your father has probably not had breakfast."

"No; but I assumed the privilege of ordering it for him," replied the latter.

"The 'privilege' was yours without assumption, my dear. You did exactly right," said the countess.

"I see that my daughter is quite at home with you, madam," observed the judge.

"Oh, I adopted her! I told her that I should be her mother until the arrival of her father," replied Lady Hurst-Monceaux, smiling.

At this moment the footman put his head in at the door to say that "his honour" the judge's breakfast was served.

Lady Hurst-Monceaux led the way to the breakfast-parlour, and then saying:

"You will make your father comfortable here, Claudia, I hope," she bowed and left them alone together.

Claudia sat down to the table and began to pour out the coffee.

James, the footman, was in attendance.

"Dismiss the servant, my dear," said the judge, as he took his seat as near to his daughter as the conveniences of the table would allow.

"You may retire, James. I will ring if you are wanted."

The man bowed and went out.

The father and daughter looked up: their eyes met, and filled with tears.

"Oh, my child, how much we have to say to each other!" sighed the judge.

"Yes; but, dear papa, drink your coffee first! You really look as though you needed it very much," replied Claudia, affectionately.

The judge complied with her advice; though, if the truth must be told, he ate and drank indiscreetly fast in order to get through soon and be at liberty to talk to his daughter.

When he arose from the table, Claudia rang the bell for the service to be removed, and then led the way again to my lady's little drawing-room.

It was deserted.

Lady Hurst-Monceaux had evidently left it that the father and daughter might converse with each other unembarrassed by the presence of a third person.

"My dear," said the judge, as he seated himself on the sofa beside his daughter, wound his arm around her shoulders and looked wistfully into her face—"do you know that I am surprised to see you looking so well? You must possess a great deal of fortitude, Claudia, to have passed through so much trouble as you have and show so few signs of suffering as you do!"

"Ah, papa! if you had arrived a few days ago and seen me then, you would have had good cause to say I looked well. But, for the last week, the intense anxiety I have felt on your account has worn me considerably."

"My poor girl! Yes, I know how that must have been. The news of the shipwreck arrived long before

we reached England, and every one must have given us up for lost!"

"I did not! Oh, no! I could not! I still hoped; but, oh! with what an agony of hope!"

"Such hope, my child, is worse than despair."

"Oh, no! I thought so then! I do not think so now! now that I have you beside me!"

"Now that it is ended! But, oh, my dear child, how hard it was for you to have anxiety for my fate added to all your other troubles!"

"Papa, anxiety for your fate was my only trouble!" said Claudia, gravely.

"How, what?—your only trouble, Claudia? I do not understand you in the least."

"All my other troubles had passed away. And now that anxiety is at an end, that trouble has also passed away and I have none."

"None, Claudia? How you perplex me, my dear."

"None, papa! I left them all behind at Castle Cragg."

"I do not, cannot comprehend you, my dear!"

"No, papa, you cannot comprehend me! no one could possibly comprehend me who had not been placed in something like my own position! But can you not imagine that when a victim has been stretched upon the rack and tortured by executioners, it is comfort enough simply to be taken off it? Or when a sinner has been in purgatory tormented by fiends, it is heaven enough only to be out of it? Oh, papa, that is not exaggeration! That is something like what I suffered at Castle Cragg! something like what I enjoy in being away from it! Think of it, papa!"

Said Claudia, gulping down the hysterical sob that arose to her throat—"think of it! me, an honourable woman, the daughter of Christian parents, to find myself living in the house, sitting at the table, in daily communication with creatures that no honest man or pure woman would ever approach! Think of me being not only in the company but in the power and at the mercy of such wretches!"

"Think, Claudia! I have thought until my brain has nearly burst! Oh, I shall!—but no matter what I shall do! I will threaten no longer; I will act! The remorseless monster! the infamous villain! I do not know how you lived through it all, Claudia!"

"I do not know myself, papa. I never fully realized my life at Castle Cragg until I got away from it and could look back on it from a distance. For the trouble then grew around me gradually, slowly, astonishing me, if you can conceive of such thing; numbing my heart; stupefying my brain; deadening my sensibilities; else I could not have endured it so quietly! Ah, it would have ended in death, though! death of the body—perhaps death of the soul! But still I knew enough, felt enough, to experience and appreciate the infinite relief of being delivered from it! Oh, papa! if you could once place yourself in my position, and feel what it was for me to leave that polluted atmosphere of treachery and hatred, and to come into this pure air of refinement, truth and love, you would understand how it is that I can feel no trouble now!"

"I do! but still I wonder to see you so well."

"Oh, sir, you know, severe as my tortures were, they were only superficial—only skin-deep; they did not reach the springs of my spirit! That is the reason why, in being relieved, I am so perfectly at ease!"

"Then you never loved that scoundrel, Claudia?"

"No, father, I never loved him. Therefore, the memory of his villainy does not haunt me, as otherwise it might. Not loving him, I ought never to have married him. If I had not, I should have escaped all the suffering."

"Ah, Claudia, would to heaven you never had married him," sighed the judge, without, however, intending to cast the least reproach on his daughter.

She felt it as a reproach, however, and exclaimed, with passionate earnestness:

"Oh, father, do not blame me—do not! I could not help it! Oh, often have I examined my conscience on that score, and asked myself if I could. And the answer has always come—No. With my nature, my passions, my pride, my ambition, I could not help doing as I have done!"

"Could not help marrying a man you could not love, Claudia?"

"No, papa, no! There were passions in my nature stronger than love. These spurred me on to my fate. I was born with a great deal of pride, inherited from—no one knows how many ancestors! This should have been curbed, trained, directed into worthy channels. But it was not. I was left to develop naturally, with the aid only of intellectual education. I did develop, from a proud, frank, high-spirited girl, into a vain, scheming, ambitious woman! I married for a title! And this is the end! How true it is that 'pride goeth before a fall, and a haughty temper before destruction!'

"Oh, Claudia, Claudia! every word you speak wounds me like a sword-thrust! It was my 'theory'

that did it all! I said I would let my trees and my daughter grow up as nature intended them to do—and what is the result? Tanglewood has grown into an inextricable wilderness, that nothing but a fire could clear, and my daughter's life has run to waste!" groaned the judge, covering his face with his hands.

"Papa—dear, dearest papa—do not grieve so. I did not mean to give you pain. I did not mean to breathe the slightest reflection upon so kind a father as you have always been to me. I meant only to explain myself a little. But I wish I had not spoken so. Forget what I have said, papa," said Claudia, tenderly caressing her father.

"Let it all pass, my dear child," said the judge, embracing her.

"And, papa, my life has not run to waste, do not think of it! I told you that my troubles had not touched the springs of my soul—they have not. Is not my mind as strong, and my heart as warm, and my spirit as sweet as ever? Papa, this day I am a better woman for all the troubles I have passed through. I have never before been much comfort to you, my poor papa; but I will go with you to Tanglewood and make your home happier than it has ever been since mamma died. And you will find that my life shall be redeemed from waste."

"Claudia, are you sure that you do not love that rascal—not even a little?"

"Papa, I do not even hate him; now judge if I ever could have loved him!"

But the judge was no metaphysician, and he looked puzzled.

"Papa, if I had ever loved that man, do you not suppose that his unfaithfulness, neglect and insults, to say nothing of his last foul wrong against me, would have turned all my love into hatred? But I never loved him, therefore all that he could do would not provoke my hatred. Papa, he is as much below my hatred as my love."

"Oh, Claudia, Claudia! that you should be compelled to speak so of one whom you made your husband!"

"Papa, dear, you asked me a question and I have replied to it faithfully."

"My dear, I had a motive for putting that question. I wished to know whether a spark of love for that man survived in your heart, to make his punishment a matter of painful interest to you. For, to vindicate you, Claudia, it may be necessary to prosecute him with the utmost rigour of the law—necessary, in fact, to disgrace and ruin him!" said the judge, solemnly.

"Papa, dear, what are you talking about? Prosecute him to the utmost extent of the law? Disgrace and ruin him? Why, it appears to me that you do not know the circumstances, as, of course, you cannot. He has schemed so successfully, papa, that he has everything his own way. All the evidence, the false but conclusive evidence, is in his favour and against me! It seems to me, reflecting coolly upon the circumstances, to be quite impossible that he should be punished, or that I should be vindicated in this world at least!"

"Claudia, I know more of these circumstances than you think I do. I know more of them than you do; and I repeat that, in order to vindicate your honour fully, it may be necessary to prosecute Malcolm, Lord Vincent, with the utmost rigour of the law—to bring him to the felon's dock—to send him to the bulks! Now, are you willing that this should be done?"

Claudia turned very pale, and answered:

"Let the man have justice, papa, if it places him on the scaffold!"

"There are two courses open to us, Claudia. The first is—simply to let him alone until he bring his suit for divorce; and then to meet him on that ground with such testimony as shall utterly defeat him and destroy his plea. In that case you will be vindicated from the charge that he has brought against you, but not from the reproach that, however undeserved, will attach to a woman who has been the defendant in a divorce trial; and he will go unpunished. The second course is to prosecute him at once in a criminal court for certain of his crimes that have come to my knowledge, and so put him out of the possibility of suing for a divorce. And in that case your honour would go unquestioned, and he would be condemned to a felon's fate—penal servitude for years! Now, Claudia, I place the man's destiny in your hands. Shall we defend ourselves against him in a divorce court, or shall we prosecute him in a criminal court?"

"Papa," said Claudia, hesitating, and then speaking low, "what does Ishmael advise?"

"Ishmael? How did you know he was with me, my dear?"

"I saw his name in the list of passengers, and I knew that he had come on with you as your private counsellor."

"Yes, he did, at a vast sacrifice of his business; but

then I never knew Worth to shrink from any self-sacrifice."

"What is his advice?" inquired Claudia, in a low voice.

"He does more than advise; in this matter he dictates—I had almost said, he commands—at least, he insists that the divorce suit shall not be permitted to come on; that it shall be stopped by the arrest of Lord Vincent upon criminal charges that we shall be able to prove upon him. And that after the conviction of the viscount, you shall bring a suit for a divorce from him; for that it would not be well that your fate should remain linked to that of a felon."

"Then, papa, let it be as Mr. Worth says. And if the prosecution should place the viscount on the scaffold, let it place him there!"

"It will not go so far as that, my dear—not in this century. If he had lived in the last century, and amused himself as he has done in this, he would have swung for it, that is certain."

"Papa, what is it that you have found out about him? Was he implicated in the death of poor Ailsie Dunbar? And, if so, how did you find it out?"

"My dearest, we have both much to tell each other. But I wish to hear your story first. Remember, Claudia, those alarming letters you sent me were very meagre in their details. Tell me everything, my child—everything, from the time you left me until the time you met me again."

"Papa, dear, it is a long, grievous, terrible story. I do not know how you will bear it. You are sensitive, excitable, impetuous! I scarcely dare to tell you. I fear to see how you will bear it. I dread its effects upon you."

"Claudia, my dearest, conceal nothing. Tell me all, and I promise to restrain my emotions, and listen to you calmly."

Upon this, Claudia commenced the narrative of her sufferings, from the moment of parting with her father to the moment of their reunion. The reader is already acquainted with the story, and does not need to hear Claudia's narration. Judge Merlin also knew much of it, as much as old Katy had been able to impart to him, but he wished to hear a more intelligent version of it from his daughter. It was, as she had said, a long, sorrowful, terrible story, such as it was not in the nature of woman to recite calmly. Some parts of it were told with pale cheeks, faltering tones, and falling tears; other parts were told with fiery blushes, flashing eyes, and clenched hands.

At its conclusion, Claudia said:

"There, papa! I have hidden nothing—I have told you everything. Now, at last, you will believe me when I tell you how perfectly relieved I feel only to be out of that purgatory—only to be away from those fiends! Now, at last, you will see how it is that I can say, without hesitation, 'Let Malcolm, Lord Vincent, have justice, though that justice consign him to penal servitude or to the gallows!' But, papa! when I said I had no trouble left, I spoke in momentary forgetfulness of my poor servants. Heaven forgive me for it! Though, really, uncertainty about their fate is the only care I have."

"My dear," said the judge, who had comported himself with wonderful calmness through the trying hour of Claudia's narration—"my dear, cast that care to the winds! Your servants are safe and well, and near at hand."

"Safe and well, and near at hand!" Oh, papa, are you certain? quite certain?" exclaimed Claudia, in joy modified by doubt.

"Quite certain, my dearest, since I myself lodged them at Magruder's Hotel this morning," said the judge.

"Oh, thank heaven!" exclaimed Claudia, fervently. "But, papa, tell me all about it. When, where, and how were they found?"

"About three weeks ago, in Havana, by Ishmael," answered the judge, speaking directly to the point.

His daughter looked so amazed that he hastened to say:

"It is easily understood, Claudia. You mentioned in the course of your narrative that you suspected the viscount of having spirited them away. Your suspicion was correct. Through the agency of chloroform he abducted them and got them on board a West Indian smuggler, and took them to Havana and there got rid of them. When we went there on the Santiago, we found, recognized and recovered them."

"And, what was his motive—the viscount's motive, I mean—for spiriting my poor servants away, and thereby committing a felony that would endanger his reputation and his liberty? What could have been his motive?"

"What you mentioned that you suspected it to be, Claudia,—to get rid of dangerous witnesses against himself. But I had better tell you the whole story," said the judge: and with that he began and related the history of the conspiracy entered into by the viscount, the valet and the ex-opera-singer, and over-

heard by Katy; the discovery and seizure of the eaves-dropper; and the abduction of the servants.

At the conclusion of this narrative, he said:

"So you see, Claudia, that we have got this man completely in our power. Look at his crimes! First, complicity in the murder of Ailsie Dunbar; secondly, conspiracy against your honour; thirdly, kidnapping and abducting! The man is already ruined; and you, my dear, are saved!"

"Oh, thank heaven! thank heaven! that at least my name will be rescued from reproach," cried Claudia, earnestly, clasping her hands, and bursting into tears of joy, and weeping on her father's bosom.

"Yes, Claudia," he whispered, as he gently soothed her; "yes, my child—thank heaven first of all; for there was something strangely providential in the seemingly dire misfortune that was the cause of our being taken to Havana! For if we had not gone thither, we should never have found the servants; and if we had not found them, it would have been difficult or impossible to have vindicated you."

"Oh, I know it! And I do thank heaven!"

"And, after heaven, there is one on earth to whom your thanks are due—Ishmael Worth! Not because he was the first to find Katy, for that was an accident, but because he sacrificed so much to attend me on this voyage; and because he has been of such inestimable value to me in this business. Claudia, but that I had him with me in Havana, I should not now be by your side! But that I had him with me, I should have plunged myself headlong into law proceedings that would have detained me in Havana for an indefinite time! But that I had him with me to restrain, to warn and to counsel, I should have prosecuted the smugglers for their share in the abduction. But I yielded to Ishmael's earnest advice, and by the sacrifice of a sum of money and a desire of vengeance, I got easy possession of the servants and brought them on here. You owe much to Ishmael Worth, Claudia."

"I know it! oh, I know it! May heaven reward him!"

"And now our witnesses are at hand; and before night, Claudia, warrants shall be issued for the arrest of the Viscount Vincent, Alick Frisbie and Faustina Dugald."

"They can have no suspicion of what is coming upon them, and therefore will have no chance to escape?"

"Not a bit! We shall come down upon them unawares."

"How astonished they will be!"

"Yes—and how confounded when confronted with my witnesses!"

"Papa, I am not malicious, but I think I should like to see their faces then!"

"My dearest Claudia, you will have to imagine them. You will not be an eye-witness to their confusion. You will not be required either at the preliminary examination or at the trial, and it would not be seemly that you should appear at either."

"Oh, I know that, papa! And I am very glad that I shall not be wanted. But will the testimony of your witnesses be sufficient to convict the criminals?"

"Amply. But that testimony will not be unsupported. We shall summon the steward and house-keeper of Castle Cragg. And now, my dear, I must leave you, if the warrants are to be issued to-day," said the judge, rising.

"So soon, papa?"

"It is necessary, my dear."

"But at any rate you will be back very shortly?"

"I do not know, my child."

"The countess expects you to make Cameron Court your home, while you remain in the neighbourhood."

"Lady Hurst-Monceaux has not said so to me, Claudia."

"She has had no fit opportunity. Wait till you are leaving."

"By the way, I must take leave of my kind hostess," said the judge, looking around the room as if in search of something or somebody.

Claudia touched the bell.

A footman entered.

"Let the countess know that the judge is going." The servant bowed and withdrew, and Lady Hurst-Monceaux entered.

"Going so soon, Judge Merlin?" she said. "Just what my daughter has this moment asked! Yes, madam; and you will acknowledge the urgency of my business, when I tell you that it is to lodge information against Lord Vincent and his accomplices, and procure their immediate arrest, upon the charge of certain grave crimes that have come to my knowledge, and that I am prepared to prove upon them."

"You astonish me, sir! I certainly had reason to suspect Lord Vincent and his disreputable companions, but I am amazed that in so short a time you should have ferreted out so much!"

"It was accident, madam; or rather," said the

judge, gravely bending his head, "it was Providence. My daughter will explain the circumstances to you, madam. And now, will you permit me once more to thank you for your great goodness to me and mine, and to bid you good morning?"

"I hope it will be only good morning, then, judge, and not good-bye. I beg that you will return and take up your residence with us while you remain in Scotland," said the countess with her sweet smile.

"I should be delighted as well as honoured, madam, in being your guest; but I am off to Banff, by the mid-day train."

"Off to Banff!" repeated Berenice and Claudia in a breath.

"Certainly."

"What is that for?" inquired Claudia.

"Why, my dear, that is where I must lodge information against the viscount and his accomplices. That is where the crimes were committed, and where the warrants must be issued."

"Oh, I see."

"I had forgotten! I was thinking—or, rather, without thinking at all, I was taking it for granted that it could be all done in Edinburgh," smiled the countess.

"Madam, I must still leave my daughter a pensioner on your kindness for a few days," said the judge with a bow.

"You say that, as if you supposed it possible for me to permit you to do anything else with her!" laughed the countess, holding out her hand to the judge.

He raised it to his lips, bowed over it, and resigned it, all in the stately, old-time way.

Then he turned to his daughter, embraced her, and departed.

"Now, Claudia, tell me what the judge has found out about Vincent. Was he implicated in that murder? I shouldn't wonder if he was!" said the countess, impatiently.

"That is just what I thought, but that is not the case. Oh, Berenice, what a revelation it is! but I will tell you all about it!" answered Claudia.

And when they were cosily seated together beside the drawing-room fire, Claudia related the story her father had told her of the conspiracy against her own honour, the abduction of her servants, and the recovery and recovery of them.

"I am not surprised at anything in that story, but the providential manner in which the servants were recovered. I believe the viscount capable of every crime, or restrained only by his cowardice. If he should hesitate at assassination, I believe it would not be from the horror of blood-guiltiness, but from the fear of the gallows! I hope, Claudia, that no weak relenting will cause either you or your father to spare such a ruthless monster!"

"No, Berenice, no. I have said to my father, 'Let Lord Vincent have justice, though that justice place him in the felon's dock, in the hulks, or on the scaffold!' No, I do not believe it would be fair to the community to turn such a man loose upon them."

While Lady Hurst-Monceaux and Lady Vincent conversed in this manner, Judge Merlin drove to Edinburgh.

He reached Magruder's hotel, where he had left Ishmael Worth, the professor, and the three servants.

Ishmael had lost no time; he had seen that the whole party had breakfast; and then he had gone himself and engaged a first-class carriage in the express train that started for Aberdeen at twelve noon.

They were now, therefore, only waiting for Judge Merlin. And as soon as the judge arrived, the whole party started for the station, which they reached in time to catch the train.

Three hours' "express" travelling northward and they ran into the station at Aberdeen.

The stage was just about starting for Banff. They got into it at once, and in three hours' more they reached that picturesque old town.

Merely waiting long enough to engage rooms at the best hotel, and deposit their luggage there, they took a carriage and drove to the house of Sir Alexander McKittrich, who was one of the most respected magistrates of Banff.

Judge Merlin introduced himself and his party, produced his credentials, laid his charge and presented his witnesses.

To say that the worthy Scotch justice was astonished, amazed, would scarcely be to describe the state of panic and consternation into which he was thrown.

Long he demurred and hesitated over the affair; again and again he questioned the accusers; over and over again he required to hear the statement; and slowly and reluctantly at last he consented to issue the warrants for the apprehension of Lord Vincent, Alick Frisbie, and Faustina Dugald.

Ishmael took care to see that these warrants were

placed in the hands of an efficient officer, with orders that he should proceed at once to the arrest of the parties named in them.

And then our party returned to their hotel to await results.

(To be continued.)

THE CAPTAIN'S CURE.

THE good ship Pioneer was on a voyage to Smyrna, under command of Captain Ichabod Harris, I being first mate. We took out with us an old naval surgeon, named Ramsdell, who was going to join a squadron of the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean.

Captain Harris was one of the most noble-hearted men I ever knew. He was a sailor every inch of him, and his men fairly worshipped him.

He would share with them in all their hardships, join with them in their joy, and do all in his power to make their situation comfortable. He knew every inch of a ship, from truck to kelson, and he knew, too, just the use for which everything was made, and how it should be used to the best advantage.

But Captain Harris had one fault—a bad, very bad one; he would get intoxicated on every possible occasion. He never commenced drinking with the intention of getting intoxicated, but when he had one glass "on board," he would drink as long as he could get it. He had been talked to by his best friends, and had promised that he never would get intoxicated again, but he would not promise not to drink.

Sometimes, after having made one of these solemn promises, he would drink a few glasses, and yet keep sober; but those sober glasses were dangerous ones for him, for they were sure to lead him off soon.

His employers had no idea how much he drank at sea. They knew he was inebriated often on shore, but they did not dream he ever was so at sea.

Harris himself acknowledged that rum was killing him, but he said he could not let it alone. When we talked to him, he listened patiently, and even kindly—and he would thank us, too, for our solicitude.

"But it's no use," he would say. "It's no use, boys; I can't help it, and when my time comes I shall die. I wish I could stop drinking, but I can't. I won't promise, for I should only tell a lie. God bless you for your kindness; I know you mean well, but it's no use!" And that was all we could get from him.

Our ship had not been at sea a week before we found that he had a cask of brandy for his own use; and the consequence was, he was drunk half the time.

I have seen him take his observation of the sun at meridian, and work out the latitude, and then cast up the dead reckoning, and give the ship her true course, when he could not stand up without leaning against something. We soon found that the habit was growing worse and worse.

Harris was now between forty and fifty, and his health was almost ruined. He ate but very little, breakfast he never touched. We told him his brandy was killing him; but he would not leave it off. He assured us he could not live without it, "and what was the use?"

I asked Dr. Ramsdell, the surgeon, what he thought about it, and he told me that, unless the captain would leave it off entirely, he could not live.

"There is no half-way point with him," said the doctor. "He must either drink none or drink enough to kill him. A remarkable constitution has upheld him thus far, but that constitution is nearly gone. And yet I cannot bear to talk with the poor fellow—he is such a noble-hearted man, and is so kind and generous, I believe he would risk his own life any moment to save that of any one in the ship."

"I know he would," said I.

"And yet," resumed Ramsdell, "he is so tender on that point, that I don't like to broach it; and then he has such a manner of always turning it off, that to reason with him is useless."

But we were resolved that Captain Harris should be saved, if possible; and we soon devised a plan that we were determined to try.

One night, he came on deck so tipsy that he could not walk, and I knew from every look and movement that he was completely oblivious to everything about him. I called some of the men to my assistance; and having made up a running bowline on the end of the mizzen-topsail halyards, I contrived to slip the noose over his shoulders, and draw it tight under his arms. He was leaning up against the quarter-rail; and as soon as this was done, I gave him a gentle trip, and overboard he went. Immediately he struck the water, he splashed and kicked wildly, and soon I heard him yell. I had the ship hoisted, and the stern boat lowered, the boat being already cleared for the purpose. We got the captain on board, and he was pretty well sobered; but he did not dream of the trick we had played upon him.

On the next morning, he wanted a "drop" of brandy the first thing.

I asked him if he remembered the narrow escape he had had last night. He said yes. Then I asked him if he had not better let the fatal stuff alone.

"No, no," said he, with a smile. "You see 'twasn't meant that I should die last night. And besides, I got a *feeling* more than usual. I must be careful."

And there was an end of that plan! But I did not give up so. I and the surgeon laid our heads together, and at length we conceived another plan.

We agreed to commence as soon as we could find Harris with a mind clear enough to understand things fully. I knew that the captain had a perfect dread of death, and that sometimes, when he felt "down at the heel," he had indulged in order to drown that feeling; only he had not the power to overcome his appetite, because the very power he needed to enable him to do that, was all broken down by intemperance.

At length an opportunity to commence, presented itself. One morning, the surgeon, the captain, and myself, were in the cabin, and the captain was sober. I had one of Ramsdell's books in my hand, from which I pretended to read.

"Doctor," said I, looking up with as much show of surprise and interest as I could assume, "this is a very curious case—this case of the old purser."

"Ah, yes," returned the doctor. "It is curious, indeed; but I have seen many similar. Last winter there were two such cases on board an English ship at Malta."

"And is there no cure at all?" I asked, looking at the book again, and then looking up.

"Well, that depends upon circumstances. An immediate abstinence from all kinds of stimulating food and drink has been known to lead to a cure. But the disorder is so malignant, that a cure is next to impossible. I pray heaven I may never see another man die under such dreadful circumstances!"

The old surgeon shuddered so terribly as he said this, that I was almost startled, for he did it to perfection.

"What is it?" asked the captain, with much interest.

"I have been reading an account here in the doctor's medical reports of one of the most strange cases I ever heard of," I replied. "It is the account of a man who died of a most extraordinary disorder. But," I continued, turning to the doctor, "do these spots always make their appearance?"

"Yes," he replied; "they are dark brownish spots; they commence suddenly upon the face, and spread rapidly all over the system. They usually prove fatal in about four-and-twenty hours after their first appearance. The spots are symptoms of an internal disorder more swift and deadly than any we yet know of; and it gives, even before death, a ghastly appearance to the body of the victim."

"But what is it?" cried the captain, trembling like an aspen. "What makes you both shudder so? What is it?"

"It is enough to make any one shudder at the bare thought," replied the doctor, "for I do not think that mortal man can conceive anything one-half so terrible."

"But what is it?"

"My friend, you may tell him, as you have just finished reading the case," said the doctor to me.

"But you understand the principle of the disorder, doctor," I urged, "and you can explain it better."

Ramsdell hesitated a few moments, and during that time Captain Harris sat like one fascinated.

"Captain Harris," at length said the doctor, "I must own that I feel a little delicate about this matter, for I have so often spoken to you upon the subject of intemperance that I fear you may think this is only hunted up now just that you might hear of it. But your mate met with it, sir, while reading some of my medical works. However, I will explain, and I shall trust to your own generosity to relieve me from all imputations of personal allusion. Some years ago, sir, I had in hand the case to which we have alluded. An old purser in our ship was very intemperate. He drank brandy by the pint and quart, and sometimes even a gallon, a day. This he had done for some years. At length, one day he complained of a strange burning sensation about the face, and a dizziness in his head; and soon little dark spots began to appear upon his face. At first we thought it might be malignant variole; but it had none of the variole symptoms. I did all for him I could, but he died, as you have heard. Some time afterwards I was in Malta, and I saw more cases of the same disease there, and one old surgeon told me what it was. He said it was a case where alcohol had wholly changed the nature and substance of the human body. You know that when a man begins to show the effects of rum in blotsches, and so forth, it always appears first upon the face; and so in this case. It seems to be a fatal disorder confined to shipboard, and I expect it is the result of the atmosphere of the ocean, combined with the natural effects of alcohol, upon some peculiar constitutions. The surgeon told me that one case he had cured even

after the spots made their appearance, but it was only done by the rigid abstinence on the part of the invalid from even tea, coffee, and anything that could operate as a stimulant. He told me that even a glass of wine would prove fatal in a few minutes."

"That is a curious circumstance," said Harris, after he had thought upon the subject a few moments.

I knew that the captain was naturally credulous, and that he would never think of calling in question the truth of the surgeon's statement, nor the fact of my having read the account as had been reported. He did not touch his brandy during that day, nor the next, nor the next. But on the morning of the fourth day I could see that he was becoming nervous and uneasy.

The truth was, he had not yet resolved not to drink—he had only been pondering upon it. It was a chilly morning, and he thought he would see if a little brandy would warm him. He tried a glass—just one glass—and before night he was inebriated as usual; and was not sober again for five whole days.

Every time he drank now he seemed to go lower and lower. At length I told the surgeon it was time to try the last remedy, and he agreed to stand by me.

Dr. Ramsdell went to work and prepared a tincture or solution of iodine.

Captain Harris was up at midnight, and on deck, but was too inebriated to stand. Yet he drank a large dram of raw brandy before he turned in again; but his brandy, which was kept for immediate use in a decanter at the head of his bunk, had been medicated since evening, and now he had taken a stiff dose of it.

Towards morning the surgeon went and rubbed the unconscious man's face over with a peculiar preparation he had made, and then he dotted the face over with the mixture of iodine.

After this, we both turned in. It was now nearly four o'clock, and it would be light in half-an-hour.

I fell asleep, and I know not how long I had slept, when I was aroused by the captain's calling me. I quickly arose and went to his state-room, the door of which was open, and directly opposite my own.

"Oh, mate, is that you?" he said, as I entered his room, for it was not very light in there, though the sun was just rising.

"Yes, sir," I answered.

"I feel very badly," he moaned. "Very badly."

"But how? You know you were very intoxicated last night."

"Yes, I know it; and I have been so for a whole week, haven't I?"

"You have, certainly."

"Oh, I feel very bad!"

"But I thought you often felt so. That is the natural consequence of such a continued debauch."

"But that isn't all?" the poor man whispered.

"What else is there?" I asked.

"Oh, I feel—a—a—I can't tell it—I can't!"

"Don't you know what it is?"

"Oh, yes. It is" (his voice settled to a shrill, alarmed whisper) "a burning all over my face!"

"Good heavens!" I cried, and I know that I spoke with every accent of terror, "you do not mean so!"

"Yes, I do. But you do not think I shall—"

The poor man dared not finish his sentence. I knew that the preparation must make his face burn, and I knew full well to what his mind was turning. He dared not speak it.

"I think I had better call the doctor," said I.

He was anxious to have the doctor come, so I went to call him. Ramsdell had heard all, and he was ready to accompany me, his room being next forward to the captain's. It was now light enough to see plainly in the state-rooms, for the sun was up, and the golden beams came in through the skylight, as the ship was heeling considerably to the eastward, under a fresh breeze. Captain Harris was truly a sorry sight to behold. His long debauch had given his eyes a bad look, and had made his cheeks hollow, —the surgeon's preparation gave them a hectic flush, and the iodine had covered his face all over with livid, brown spots.

"What is it, captain?" asked Dr. Ramsdell, as he entered the room.

"Oh, doctor. I feel dreadfully. But what are you looking at? Good mercy, tell me what makes you stare at me so?"

The poor man started up to a sitting posture as he spoke, and seized the surgeon by the arm. And both the surgeon and myself gazed upon him in well-feigned horror.

"Captain Harris," spoke Ramsdell, in a low hollow tone, "lie down and keep quiet."

The sick man was seized with a sudden spasm, and as soon as this was passed, the doctor asked him how he felt.

"It is a burning all over my face," returned Harris.

"A dreadful burning!" he continued, in a convulsed whisper. "Oh, what is it?"

Ramsdell then whispered with me.

"I think it is best to tell him," he said, loud enough

then I never knew Worth to shrink from any self-sacrifice."

"What is his advice?" inquired Claudia, in a low voice.

"He does more than advise; in this matter he dictates—I had almost said, he commands—at least, he insists that the divorce suit shall not be permitted to come on; that it shall be stopped by the arrest of Lord Vincent upon criminal charges that we shall be able to prove upon him. And that after the conviction of the viscount, you shall bring a suit for a divorce from him; for that it would not be well that your fate should remain linked to that of a felon."

"Then, papa, let it be as Mr. Worth says. And if the prosecution should place the viscount on the scaffold, let it place him there!"

"It will not go so far as that, my dear—not in this century. If he had lived in the last century, and amused himself as he has done in this, he would have swung for it, that is certain."

"Papa, what is it that you have found out about him? Was he implicated in the death of poor Ailie Dunbar? And, if so, how did you find it out? Tell me."

"My dearest, we have both much to tell each other. But I wish to hear your story first. Remember, Claudia, those alarming letters you sent me were very meagre in their details. Tell me everything, my child—everything, from the time you left me until the time you met me again."

"Papa, dear, it is a long, grievous, terrible story. I do not know how you will bear it. You are sensitive, excitable, impetuous! I scarcely dare to tell you. I fear to see how you will bear it. I dread its effects upon you."

"Claudia, my dearest, conceal nothing. Tell me all, and I promise to restrain my emotions, and listen to you calmly."

Upon this, Claudia commenced the narrative of her suffering, from the moment of parting with her father to the moment of their reunion. The reader is already acquainted with the story, and does not need to hear Claudia's narration. Judge Merlin also knew much of it, as much as old Katy had been able to impart to him, but he wished to hear a more intelligent version of it from his daughter. It was, as she had said, a long, sorrowful, terrible story, such as it was not in the nature of woman to recite calmly. Some parts of it were told with pale cheeks, faltering tones, and falling tears; other parts were told with fiery blushest, dashing eyes, and clenched hands.

At its conclusion, Claudia said:

"There, papa! I have hidden nothing—I have told you everything. Now, at last, you will believe me when I tell you how perfectly relieved I feel only to be out of that purgatory—only to be away from those fiends! Now, at last, you will see how it is that I can say, without hesitancy, 'Let Malcolm, Lord Vincent, have justice, though that justice consign him to penal servitude or to the gallows!' But, papa! when I said I had no trouble left, I spoke in momentary forgetfulness of my poor servants. Heaven forgive me for it! Though, really, uncertainty about their fate is the only care I have."

"My dear," said the judge, who had comported himself with wonderful calmness through the trying hour of Claudia's narration—"my dear, cast that care to the winds! Your servants are safe and well, and near at hand."

"Safe and well, and near at hand!" Oh, papa, are you certain? quite certain?" exclaimed Claudia, in joy modified by doubt.

"Quite certain, my dearest, since I myself lodged them at Magruder's Hotel this morning," said the judge.

"Oli, thank heaven!" exclaimed Claudia, fervently. "But, papa, tell me all about it. When, where, and how were they found?"

"About three weeks ago, in Havana, by Ishmael," answered the judge, speaking directly to the point.

His daughter looked so amazed that he hastened to say:

"It is easily understood, Claudia. You mentioned in the course of your narrative that you suspected the viscount of having spirited them away. Your suspicion was correct. Through the agency of chloroform he abducted them and got them on board a West Indian smuggler, and took them to Havana and there got rid of them. When we went there on the Santiago, we found, recognized and recovered them."

"And, what was his motive—the viscount's motive, I mean—for spiritting my poor servants away, and thereby committing a felony that would endanger his reputation and his liberty? What could have been his motive?"

"What you mentioned that you suspected it to be, Claudia,—to get rid of dangerous witnesses against himself. But I had better tell you the whole story," said the judge: and with that he began and related the history of the conspiracy entered into by the viscount, the valet and the ex-opera-singer, and over-

heard by Katy; the discovery and seizure of the eaves-dropper; and the abduction of the servants.

At the conclusion of this narrative, he said:

"So you see, Claudia, that we have got this man completely in our power. Look at his crimes! First, complicity in the murder of Alarie Dunbar; secondly, conspiracy against your honour; thirdly, kidnapping and abducting! The man is already ruined; and you, my dear, are saved!"

"Oh, thank heaven! thank heaven! that at least my name will be rescued from reproach," cried Claudia, earnestly, clasping her hands, and bursting into tears of joy, and weeping on her father's bosom.

"Yes, Claudia," he whispered, as he gently soothed her; "yes, my child—thank heaven first of all; for there was something strangely providential in the seemingly dire misfortune that was the cause of our being taken to Havana! For if we had not gone thither, we should never have found the servants; and if we had not found them, it would have been difficult or impossible to have vindicated you."

"Oh, I know it! And I do thank heaven!"

"And, after heaven, there is one on earth to whom your thanks are due—Ishmael Worth! Not because he was the first to find Katy, for that was an accident, but because he sacrificed so much to attend me on this voyage; and because he has been of such inestimable value to me in this business. Claudia, but that I had him with me in Havana, I should not now be by your side! But that I had him with me, I should have plunged myself headlong into law proceedings that would have detained me in Havana for an indefinite time! But that I had him with me to restrain, to warn and to counsel, I should have prosecuted the smugglers for their share in the abduction. But I yielded to Ishmael's earnest advice, and by the sacrifice of a sum of money and a desire of vengeance, I got easy possession of the servants and brought them on here. You owe much to Ishmael Worth, Claudia."

"I know it! oh, I know it! May heaven reward him!"

"And now our witnesses are at hand; and before night, Claudia, warrants shall be issued for the arrest of the Viscount Vincent, Alick Frisbie and Faustina Dugald."

"They can have no suspicion of what is coming upon them, and therefore will have no chance to escape?"

"Not a bit! We shall come down upon them unawares."

"How astonished they will be!"

"Yes—and how confounded when confronted with my witnesses!"

"Papa, I am not malicious, but I think I should like to see their faces then!"

"My dearest Claudia, you will have to imagine them. You will not be an eye-witness to their confusion. You will not be required either at the preliminary examination or at the trial, and it would not be seemly that you should appear at either."

"Oh, I know that, papa! And I am very glad that I shall not be wanted. But will the testimony of your witnesses be sufficient to convict the criminals?"

"Amply. But that testimony will not be unsupported. We shall summon the steward and house-keeper of Castle Cragg. And now, my dear, I must leave you, if the warrants are to be issued to-day," said the judge, rising.

"So soon, papa?"

"It is necessary, my dear."

"But at any rate you will be back very shortly?"

"I do not know, my child."

"The countess expects you to make Cameron Court your home, while you remain in the neighbourhood."

"Lady Hurst-Monceaux has not said so to me, Claudia."

"She has had no fit opportunity. Wait till you are leaving."

"By the way, I must take leave of my kind hostess," said the judge, looking around the room as if in search of something or somebody.

Claudia touched the bell.

A footman entered.

"Let the countess know that the judge is going."

The servant bowed and withdrew, and Lady Hurst-Monceaux entered.

"Going so soon, Judge Merlin?" she said.

"Just what my daughter has this moment asked! Yes, madam; and you will acknowledge the urgency of my business, when I tell you that it is to lodge information against Lord Vincent and his accomplices, and procure their immediate arrest, upon the charge of certain grave crimes that have come to my knowledge, and that I am prepared to prove upon them."

"You astonish me, sir! I certainly had reason to suspect Lord Vincent and his disreputable companions, but I am amazed that in so short a time you should have ferreted out so much!"

"It was accident, madam; or rather," said the

judge, gravely bending his head, "it was Providence. My daughter will explain the circumstances to you, madam. And now, will you permit me once more to thank you for your great goodness to me and mine, and to bid you good morning?"

"I hope it will be only good morning, then, judge, and not good-bye. I beg that you will return and take up your residence with us while you remain in Scotland," said the countess with her sweet smile.

"I should be delighted as well as honoured, madam, in being your guest; but I am off to Banff, by the mid-day train."

"Off to Banff!" repeated Berenice and Claudia in a breath.

"Certainly."

"What is that for?" inquired Claudia.

"Why, my dear, that is where I must lodge information against the viscount and his accomplices. That is where the crimes were committed, and where the warrants must be issued."

"Oh, I see."

"I had forgotten! I was thinking—or, rather, without thinking at all; I was taking it for granted that it could be all done in Edinburgh," smiled the countess.

"Madam, I must still leave my daughter a pensioner on your kindness for a few days," said the judge with a bow.

"You say that, as if you supposed it possible for me to permit you to do anything else with her!" laughed the countess, holding out her hand to the judge.

He raised it to his lips, bowed over it, and resigned it, all in the stately, old-time way.

Then he turned to his daughter, embraced her, and departed.

"Now, Claudia, tell me what the judge has found out about Vincent. Was he implicated in that murder? I shouldn't wonder if he was!" said the countess, impatiently.

"That is just what I thought, but that is not the case. Oh, Berenice, what a revelation it is! but I will tell you all about it!" answered Claudia.

And when they were cosily seated together beside the drawing-room fire, Claudia related the story her father had told her of the conspiracy against her own honour, the abduction of her servants, and the recognition and recovery of them.

"I am not surprised at anything in that story, but the providential manner in which the servants were recovered. I believe the viscount capable of every crime, or restrained only by his cowardice. If he should hesitate at assassination, I believe it would not be from the horror of blood-guiltiness, but from the fear of the gallows! I hope, Claudia, that no weak relenting will cause either you or your father to spare such a ruthless monster!"

"No, Berenice, no. I have said to my father, 'Let Lord Vincent have justice, though that justice place him in the felon's dock, in the hulks, or on the scaffold!' No, I do not believe it would be fair to the community to turn such a man loose upon them."

While Lady Hurst-Monceaux and Lady Vincent conversed in this manner, Judge Merlin drove to Edinburgh.

He reached Magruder's hotel, where he had left Ishmael Worth, the professor, and the three servants.

Ishmael had lost no time; he had seen that the whole party had breakfast; and then he had gone himself and engaged a first-class carriage in the express train that started for Aberdeen at twelve, noon.

They were now, therefore, only waiting for Judge Merlin. And as soon as the judge arrived, the whole party started for the station, which they reached in time to catch the train.

Three hours' "express" travelling northward and they ran into the station at Aberdeen.

The stage was just about starting for Banff. They got into it at once, and in three hours' more they reached that picturesque old town.

Merely waiting long enough to engage rooms at the best hotel, and deposit their luggage there, they took a carriage and drove to the house of Sir Alexander McKittrick, who was one of the most respected magistrates of Banff.

Judge Merlin introduced himself and his party, produced his credentials, laid his charge and presented his witnesses.

To say that the worthy Scotch justice was astonished, amazed, would scarcely be to describe the state of panic and consternation into which he was thrown.

Long he demurred and hesitated over the affair; again and again he questioned the accusers; over and over again he required to hear the statement; and slowly and reluctantly at last he consented to issue the warrants for the apprehension of Lord Vincent, Alick Frisbie, and Faustina Dugald.

Ishmael took care to see that these warrants were

placed in the hands of an efficient officer, with orders that he should proceed at once to the arrest of the parties named in them.

And then our party returned to their hotel to await results.

(To be continued.)

THE CAPTAIN'S CURE.

The good ship Pioneer was on a voyage to Smyrna, under command of Captain Ichabod Harris, I being first mate. We took out with us an old naval surgeon, named Ramsdell, who was going to join a squadron of the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean.

Captain Harris was one of the most noble-hearted men I ever knew. He was a sailor every inch of him, and his men fairly worshipped him.

He would share with them in all their hardships, join with them in their joy, and do all in his power to make their situation comfortable. He knew every inch of a ship, from truck to kelson, and he knew, too, just the use for which everything was made, and how it should be used to the best advantage.

But Captain Harris had one fault—a bad, very bad one; he would get intoxicated on every possible occasion. He never commenced drinking with the intention of getting intoxicated, but when he had one glass "on board," he would drink as long as he could get it. He had been talked to by his best friends, and had promised that he never would get intoxicated again, but he would not promise not to drink.

Sometimes, after having made one of these solemn promises, he would drink a few glasses, and yet keep sober; but those sober glasses were dangerous ones for him, for they were sure to lead him off soon.

His employers had no idea how much he drank at sea. They knew he was inebriated often on shore, but they did not dream he ever was so at sea.

Harris himself acknowledged that rum was killing him, but he said he could not let it alone. When we talked to him, he listened patiently, and even kindly—and he would thank us, too, for our solicitude.

"But it's no use," he would say. "It's no use, boys; I can't help it, and when my time comes I shall die. I wish I could stop drinking, but I can't. I won't promise, for I should only tell a lie. God bless you for your kindness; I know you mean well, but it's no use!" And that was all we could get from him.

Our ship had not been at sea a week before we found that he had a cask of brandy for his own use; and the consequence was, he was drunk half the time.

I have seen him take his observation of the sun at meridian, and work out the latitude, and then cast up the dead reckoning, and give the ship her true course, when he could not stand up without leaning against something. We soon found that the habit was growing worse and worse.

Harris was now between forty and fifty, and his health was almost ruined. He ate but very little. Breakfast he never touched. We told him his brandy was killing him; but he would not leave it off. He assured us he could not live without it, "and what was the use?"

I asked Dr. Ramsdell, the surgeon, what he thought about it, and he told me that, unless the captain would leave it off entirely, he could not live.

"There is no half-way point with him," said the doctor. "He must either drink none or drink enough to kill him. A remarkable constitution has upheld him thus far, but that constitution is nearly gone. And yet I cannot bear to talk with the poor fellow—he is such a noble-hearted man, and is so kind and generous. I believe he would risk his own life any moment to save that of any one in the ship."

"I know he would," said I.

"And yet," resumed Ramsdell, "he is so tender on that point, that I don't like to broach it; and then he has such a manner of always turning it off, that to reason with him is useless."

But we were resolved that Captain Harris should be saved, if possible; and we soon devised a plan that we were determined to try.

One night, he came on deck so tipsy that he could not walk, and I knew from every look and movement that he was completely oblivious to everything about him. I called some of the men to my assistance; and having made up a running bowline on the end of the mizzen-top-sail halyards, I contrived to slip the noose over his shoulders, and draw it tight under his arms. He was leaning up against the quarter-rail; and as soon as this was done, I gave him a gentle trip, and overboard he went. Immediately he struck the water, he splashed and kicked wildly, and soon I heard him yell. I had the ship hove to, and the stern boat lowered, the boat being already cleared for the purpose. We got the captain on board, and he was pretty well sobered; but he did not dream of the trick we had played upon him.

On the next morning, he wanted a "drop" of brandy the first thing.

I asked him if he remembered the narrow escape he had had last night. He said yes. Then I asked him if he had not better let the fatal stuff alone.

"No, no," said he, with a smile. "You see 'twasn't meant that I should die last night. And besides, I got a little more than usual. I must be careful."

And there was an end of that plan! But I did not give up so. I and the surgeon laid our heads together, and at length we conceived another plan.

We agreed to commence as soon as we could find Harris with a mind clear enough to understand things fully. I knew that the captain had a perfect dread of death, and that sometimes, when he felt "down at the heel," he had indulged in order to drown that feeling; only he had not the power to overcome his appetite, because the very power he needed to enable him to do that, was all broken down by intemperance.

At length an opportunity to commence, presented itself. One morning, the surgeon, the captain, and myself, were in the cabin, and the captain was sober. I had one of Ramsdell's books in my hand, from which I pretended to read.

"Doctor," said I, looking up with as much show of surprise and interest as I could assume, "this is a very curious case—this case of the old purser."

"Ah, yes," returned the doctor, "it is curious, indeed; but I have seen many similar. Last winter there were two such cases on board an English ship at Malta."

"And is there no cure at all?" I asked, looking at the book again, and then looking up.

"Well, that depends upon circumstances. An immediate abstinence from all kinds of stimulating food and drink has been known to lead to a cure. But the disorder is so malignant, that a cure is next to impossible. I pray heaven I may never see another man die under such dreadful circumstances!"

The old surgeon shuddered so terribly as he said this, that I was almost startled, for he did it to perfection.

"What is it?" asked the captain, with much interest.

"I have been reading an account here in the doctor's medical reports of one of the most strange cases I ever heard of," I replied. "It is the account of a man who died of a most extraordinary disorder. But," I continued, turning to the doctor, "do these spots always make their appearance?"

"Yes," he replied; "they are dark brownish spots; they commence suddenly upon the face, and spread rapidly all over the system. They usually prove fatal in about four-and-twenty hours after their first appearance. The spots are symptoms of an internal disorder more swift and deadly than any we yet know of; and it gives, even before death, a ghastly appearance to the body of the victim."

"But what is it?" cried the captain, trembling like an aspen. "What makes you both shudder so? What is it?"

"It is enough to make any one shudder at the bare thought," replied the doctor, "for I do not think that mortal man can conceive anything one-half so terrible."

"But what is it?"

"My friend, you may tell him, as you have just finished reading the case," said the doctor to me.

"But you understand the principle of the disorder, doctor," I urged, "and you can explain it better."

Ramsdell hesitated a few moments, and during that time Captain Harris sat like one fascinated.

"Captain Harris," at length said the doctor, "I must own that I feel a little delicate about this matter, for I have so often spoken to you upon the subject of intemperance that I fear you may think this is only hunted up now just that you might hear of it. But your mate met with it, sir, while reading some of my medical works. However, I will explain, and I shall trust to your own generosity to relieve me from all imputations of personal allusion. Some years ago, sir, I had in hand the case to which we have alluded. An old purser in our ship was very intemperate. He drank brandy by the pint and quart, and sometimes even a gallon, a day. This he had done for some years. At length, one day he complained of a strange burning sensation about the face, and a dizziness in his head; and soon little dark spots began to appear upon his face. At first we thought it might be malignant variole; but it had none of the variole symptoms. I did all for him I could, but he died, as you have heard. Some time afterwards I was in Malta, and I saw more cases of the same disease there, and one old surgeon told me what it was. He said it was a case where alcohol had wholly changed the nature and substance of the human body. You know that when a man begins to show the effects of rum in blotches, and so forth, it always appears first upon the face; and so in this case. It seems to be a fatal disorder confined to shipboard, and I expect it is the result of the atmosphere of the ocean, combined with the natural effects of alcohol, upon some peculiar constitutions. The surgeon told me that one case he had cured even

after the spots made their appearance, but it was only done by the rigid abstinence on the part of the invalid from even tea, coffee, and anything that could operate as a stimulant. He told me that even a glass of wine would prove fatal in a few minutes."

"That is a curious circumstance," said Harris, after he had thought upon the subject a few moments.

I knew that the captain was naturally credulous, and that he would never think of calling in question the truth of the surgeon's statement, nor the fact of my having read the account as had been reported. He did not touch his brandy during that day, nor the next, nor the next. But on the morning of the fourth day I could see that he was becoming nervous and uneasy.

The truth was, he had not yet resolved not to drink—he had only been pondering upon it. It was a chilly morning, and he thought he would see if a little brandy would warm him. He tried a glass—just one glass—and before night he was inebriated as usual; and was not sober again for five whole days.

Every time he drank now he seemed to go lower and lower. At length I told the surgeon it was time to try the last remedy, and he agreed to stand by me.

Dr. Ramsdell went to work and prepared a tincture or solution of iodine.

Captain Harris was up at midnight, and on deck, but was too intoxicated to stand. Yet he drank a large dram of raw brandy before he turned in again; but his brandy, which was kept for immediate use in a decanter at the head of his bunk, had been medicated since evening, and now he had taken a stiff dose of it.

Towards morning the surgeon went and rubbed the unconscious man's face over with a peculiar preparation he had made, and then he dotted the face over with the mixture of iodine.

After this, we both turned in. It was now nearly four o'clock, and it would be light in half-an-hour.

I fell asleep, and I know not how long I had slept, when I was aroused by the captain's calling me. I quickly arose and went to his state-room, the door of which was open, and directly opposite my own.

"Oh, mate, is that you?" he said, as I entered his room, for it was not very light in there, though the sun was just rising.

"Yes, sir," I answered.

"I feel very badly," he moaned. "Very badly."

"But how? You know you were very intoxicated last night."

"Yes, I know it; and I have been so for a whole week, haven't I?"

"You have, certainly."

"Oh, I feel very bad!"

"But I thought you often felt so. That is the natural consequence of such a continued debauch."

"But that isn't all?" the poor man whispered.

"What else is there?" I asked.

"Oh, I feel—a—a—I can't tell it—I can't!"

"Don't you know what it is?"

"Oh, yes. It is" (his voice settled to a shrill, alarmed whisper) "a burning all over my face!"

"Good heavens!" I cried, and I know that I spoke with every accent of terror, "you do not mean so!"

"Yes, I do. But you do not think I shall—"

The poor man dared not finish his sentence. I knew that the preparation must make his face burn, and I knew full well to what his mind was turning. He dared not speak it.

"I think I had better call the doctor," said I.

He was anxious to have the doctor come, so I went to call him. Ramsdell had heard all, and he was ready to accompany me, his room being next forward to the captain's. It was now light enough to see plainly in the state-rooms, for the sun was up, and the golden beams came in through the skylight, as the ship was heeling considerably to the eastward, under a fresh breeze. Captain Harris was truly a sorry sight to behold. His long debauch had given his eyes a bad look, and had made his cheeks hollow, the surgeon's preparation gave them a hectic flush, and the iodine had covered his face all over with livid, brown spots.

"What is it, captain?" asked Dr. Ramsdell, as he entered the room.

"Oh, doctor, I feel dreadfully. But what are you looking at? Good mercy, tell me what makes you stare at me so?"

The poor man started up to a sitting posture as he spoke, and seized the surgeon by the arm. And both the surgeon and myself gazed upon him in well-feigned horror.

"Captain Harris," spoke Ramsdell, in a low hollow tone, "lie down and keep quiet."

The sick man was seized with a sudden spasm, and as soon as this was passed, the doctor asked him how he felt.

"It is a burning all over my face," returned Harris.

"A dreadful burning!" he continued, in a convulsed whisper. "Oh, what is it?"

Ramsdell then whispered with me.

"I think it is best to tell him," he said, loud enough

for the captain to hear, but in such a manner as if he meant otherwise.

"Of course he must know it," said I, in the same tone, and being careful that the captain should understand me. "Of course," I added, "for he may wish to leave some message, or make a will. He has a wife and children—he may wish to send some word to them before he becomes delirious."

Captain Harris did not speak—he dared not. But Ramsdell went and took down the mirror which hung over the washstand, it being only secured by a hook at the top, and two revolving beackets at the bottom, and this he carried to the bunk.

He held it up before the sick man, as he half-rose to a sitting posture.

"Look!" the doctor said.

Harris looked into the mirror, and then, with one low, convulsive cry of agony, he fell back. It was some minutes before he spoke. I almost wished then that we had not done it, for his agony I feared would kill him outright, and I whispered my fears to the surgeon.

But he told me there was no danger. He said the man had not physical strength enough for fear to operate fatally upon.

"Must I die?" the sufferer at length asked.

"What can I do?" returned Ramsdell.

"But you said the thing had once been cured?"

"Yes, once. But in that case the victim was willing to help himself."

"How?" whispered Harris.

"I told you once. He gave up the cause of hisisease."

"Save me—save me! Oh! let me once more see my wife and children."

"I will try," was the answer—"I will try, if you will!"

"If I will?" cried the captain, starting up. "Listen! Listen! Here, before heaven and yourselves, do I most solemnly vow never—never—never again to touch anything that can intoxicate! Ichabod Harris never broke such a vow!"

"You have gained half the victory," said Ramsdell, with a sparkling eye, "for you have made me anxious to save you; and if the thing can be done by mortal man, I will do it. Now, rest as quietly as possible."

And Dr. Ramsdell went to work. He dosed the sick man first, to weaken him more, and at the same time cleanse his system.

At the end of a week the spots left his face.

At the end of another week, the doctor began to administer restoratives; and on the morning that we passed Milo, and entered the Grecian Archipelago, Captain Harris came on deck, a new man.

His desire for brandy was gone. The very smell of it made him ill. The cask was taken from his state-room, and thrown overboard.

At Smyrna, Dr. Ramsdell left us, and Captain Harris blessed him for saving his life. And most truly did the doctor save his life, though not in the way he fancied it was done.

On our return, I went with Harris to see his family. His wife could hardly believe her own eyes.

"Ah, Lizzie!" he said, as he kissed her, "you wonder to see me sober—oh?"

She acknowledged that she did.

"Well, I haven't touched a drop of spirits for over four months." (The wife started). "And I have sworn a most sacred oath that I never will touch it again. What, crying?"

How could she help crying? But Harris saw how happy she was, and he told me that one sight paid him a thousand times over for what he had done.

Poor Lizzie Harris had suffered enough from her husband's fault; but she suffered no more. She was among the happiest of the happy.

Three years after that, I wondered what effect it would have to tell Harris of the deception we had practised upon him.

I did not believe he would go back to his cups again; and I told him all. He gazed at me a few moments in silence. Then he caught my hand, and, while the tears started to his eyes, he cried:

"Bless you! Bless you! I shall bless you more than ever now, for then I thought you only saved my life, but now you have saved my family!"

"And you will not go back?" said I.

I shall never forget the look he gave me then. He answered in a whisper, and as follows:

"When the sun turns black—when the earth ceases to roll—when heaven itself ceases to love its children—when there is joy in blackest sin; then will I take the accursed cup again, and become the vile thing that I once was!"

A. C. B.

FLOGGING IN THE ARMY.—By a very small majority of three the Government escaped a defeat by surprise on the question of flogging in the army. There can be no doubt that the use of the lash in the army stamps the British soldier as an inferior being to

the soldiers of the armies in which discipline is thoroughly maintained by other means, even though they be more severe; but we fear the day has not arrived when it can be safely dispensed with in all cases, though flogging may be restricted without injury to the service. The British soldier is a volunteer, but he is often the conscript of misery, who has learned in an evil school, and needs the severest punishment. So it is said. The colonels in the division list show that those who have had the best means of becoming acquainted with the condition of affairs in the army, believe it would be most mischievous to dispense with the power of flogging. There are some persons who think that people would be better for not having the fear of hanging before their eyes, whenever they have homicidal or other manias upon them; but society generally, and the best and most philanthropic men in the country, are obliged to admit it as a horrid necessity.

PLAIN MARY ALLEN.

SHE was not handsome. She was not brilliant. She had none of those salient points of character from which light flashes. You would not single her out in a room. And yet, no intelligent person could sit beside plain Mary Allen, for ten minutes, without being interested. When she talked, there was a certain firmness of tone, and earnestness of manner, that gave weight to her well-considered utterances. You felt that what she said had a meaning in her thought, and was not simply the light impression of a passing sentiment.

"Do you know Miss Allen?" said a young officer, named Wilmot. He asked the question of a lady friend, whom he had found quite agreeable—a Miss Helen Wilde.

"I have met her in company a few times—nothing more."

"She seems to be an intelligent girl," remarked the officer.

"She is said to be very peculiar," answered Miss Wilde.

"Ah! In what respect?"

"Odd."

"Odd?" Captain Wilmot smiled. "What do you mean by odd, Miss Allen? To me, she appeared anything else but an oddity—calm, quiet, self-possessed, and agreeable in conversation."

"I know nothing of her myself," returned Miss Wilde, "and only spoke from hearsay. People mention her as peculiar. A person who will do out-of-the-way things."

"Independent?" suggested Captain Wilmot.

"Yes; that word expresses it, no doubt. Independent. Don't care. If she wants to do a thing, she will do it, and not stop to ask what you or I may think."

"But only, 'Is it right?'" remarked the captain.

"I can't say as to that. I don't know her intimately; and, in fact, have no desire for a very close acquaintance. These independent, peculiar, one-sided people never had any attractions for me. There is so little that is sympathetic about them. They don't flow in with you. Stand on principle, as they call it, no matter how trifling the question may be."

"Miss Allen is one of this kind?" said Captain Wilmot.

"Yes, I believe so."

"Then I will know her better." This was spoken inwardly. While thought was still playing around this conclusion, Miss Wilde said:

"Are you not going to Mrs. Barton's, next week?"

"That is my present intention. Will you be there?"

"If nothing happens to prevent."

A brief pause in the conversation followed. When resumed, the subject was changed.

The entertainment at Mrs. Barton's, to which reference had been made by Captain Wilmot, was to come off within a few days. Plain Mary Allen had received a card.

"You must go," said her mother. The voice was thin and weak. Large, tender eyes, bright from hectic flushes, looked fondly across the room to where Mary sat near a window, holding in her hand a card of invitation.

Mary did not answer. She dropped her eyes to the floor, and sat musing.

"There is time enough to have a dress made," said Mrs. Allen.

"I shall not get a new dress," replied Mary. "My blue and white plaid, with a little change of trimming, will answer."

"But you have worn it so many times," objected Mrs. Allen.

"No matter. I am scarcely of sufficient consequence for people to keep an inventory of my wardrobe. Not one in ten, if asked, would be able to say whether I had appeared in the dress before, or not."

"Don't believe it, my child. Some people are hawk-eyed in these matters."

"I wish them better employment," returned Mary. "As for a new dress, I can't think it would be right for me to spend the money at this time, more particularly," she added, in a lower voice, touched with feeling, "as it is not at all certain that I shall go when the evening comes round."

"Why not, Mary?" Mrs. Allen spoke with some surprise.

"If you are no better than you are to-day, mother, I shall not leave you."

"Oh, I shall be better. It was the excitement of company, yesterday, that gave me such a bad night, and leaves me so weak and nervous to-day."

A paroxysm of coughing followed this sentence. Mary arose quickly, tossing aside the card of invitation, and going to where her mother sat in a large, cushioned chair, held her head while the attack lasted, and, when it was over, drew it lovingly against her bosom.

"I think you ought to have a new dress, Mary," said Mrs. Allen, as soon as she felt strong enough to speak again.

The mother's pride, love, and forecast were with the daughter, her only child, who, when she passed away, must be left alone in the world. She desired the new dress for Mary in order that she might not be eclipsed or overshadowed by other young ladies at Mrs. Barton's.

"Your cousin Jane will stay with me. I will send for her."

"She may have an engagement on the same evening," suggested Mary.

"It isn't likely. Anyhow, I'll send for her. You must buy the dress. Go to-day."

But Mary demurred to this, saying that, considering their circumstances, she did not think it right to spend ten or twenty pounds for a new dress just for a party.

While the fond contention was going on, a servant handed in a card.

It bore the name of Captain Wilmot.

"Say that I will receive him."

The servant withdrew.

"Who is it?" asked Mrs. Allen.

Her watchful eyes had noted a change on her daughter's face, and a deepening of its colour.

"Captain Wilmot!" replied Mary.

"Captain Wilmot!" The surprise in Mrs. Allen's voice was marked. "Have you met him?"

"Yes, once. He was at Mrs. Cline's."

Mary went down and saw the captain, who sat talking with her a whole hour. Just before retiring, he asked if she were going to Mrs. Barton's.

"It is my present intention to go," she replied.

"If entirely agreeable, Miss Allen, I will call for you."

She answered, frankly, that it would be agreeable. So he went away with this understanding.

In that short hour the heart of Mary had been touched. The tones of Captain Wilmot had a melody never heard by her in any other voice. His eyes had looked into hers with a meaning never read in eyes before. There was a something about him that penetrated to her inner life and consciousness, and awakened a delicious sense of pleasure.

When Mrs. Allen learned that Captain Wilmot was to call for Mary on the night of Mrs. Barton's entertainment, and saw by Mary's manner how much she was pleased by the compliment, she was still more in earnest about the new dress. But on this point Mary did not change her views.

"We cannot afford the expense, mother," was her argument, backed by the assertion that, with a little change in the trimming, which would not cost over a sovereign, her blue and white silk could be made to look very nice indeed."

Two or three evenings afterwards, Captain Wilmot met Miss Wilde again. She was one of those free, forward, chatty girls, always trying to be agreeable and make a good impression, with whom young men get easily on terms of intimacy.

"I called to see your oddity the other day," said the captain.

"What oddity? Whom do you mean?"

"Miss Allen."

"Indeed!" An amused expression flashed over the bright face of Miss Allen. "Well, what did you make of her? She met you in the morning wrapper and curlpapers—eh?"

"Upon my word, Miss Wilde," answered the captain, "if I were to be put on oath, I couldn't say what kind of a dress she wore. There were no curlpapers, however, for I remember that her brown hair was smooth, and as glossy as a bird's wing."

"How long did she keep you waiting?"

"Not three minutes."

"You were charmed, of course?"

There was just a little irony in the tones of Miss Wilde.

"So well pleased," answered the captain, "that I

could not resist the inclination to ask if I should call for her on next Wednesday evening."

"Well, what did she say?"

"I am to call."

"And you expect to find her all ready, of course?"

"Certainly."

There was a shrug and a grimace. Sprightly girls do these things, sometimes.

"What do you mean?" asked the captain.

"I expect to see you, all forlorn, at Mrs. Barton's."

"You don't mean that Miss Allen will recede from her engagement?"

"She's peculiar, captain. I told you that before—*an oddity*. To *me* she will change her mind before next Wednesday evening. There'll be a headache, a sick mother—her mother is an invalid, I've heard—or some other excuse. It won't be the first time."

"Why do you say, 'Not the first time?'" asked Captain Wilmot.

"Because, to my certain knowledge, she has failed to keep two engagements of a like character."

The captain smiled, incredulously, and said that he had no fears.

But, as the time drew on, he could not help recalling the conversation with Miss Wilde, and feeling just a little uncertain and uncomfortable.

Now, in the eyes of Miss Wilde, the captain had found favour. This being so, she very naturally desired to find favour in his eyes.

It did not affect her pleasantly, this evident drawing of Captain Wilmot toward Mary Allen, a girl whose attractions she had so lightly esteemed that rivalry had not been thought of as possible.

There was, therefore, personal feeling in her depreciation of Mary Allen, which led to invention as well as exaggeration.

It was Monday, and the party was to come off on Wednesday evening. Miss Wilde could not get the thought of Mary Allen out of her mind.

She knew a cousin of hers, named Jane Ridgely, intimately. This cousin was a girl something after her own style. Thinking about Mary brought up the image of Jane, and the thought of Jane prompted a visit. So she put on her walking dress, and went to see her. It soon came out in conversation that Jane was going to spend the evening with Mrs. Allen, who was too sick to be left alone, in order that her cousin might go to the party at Mrs. Barton's.

"You are wonderfully self-sacrificing," was responded to this.

"Why do you say so?" asked Jane.

"You had an invitation to the party."

"No—I am not in Mrs. Barton's circle."

"There has been a mistake, or some unaccountable delay," said Miss Wilde, through whose thought had flashed a scheme for disappointing Mary Allen, and, at the same time, hurting her in the estimation of Captain Wilmot.

"I know Mrs. Barton intended inviting you. In fact, I saw a card with your name."

"Are you sure?"

Jane's eyes grew bright, and a warmer colour tailed over her face.

"Certain. The invitations were very extensive, and it is just possible that a careless servant may have delayed some of them even to this late period. I am almost certain yours will come to-day."

"It will be too late. I should have no time for preparation left," said Jane, in a tone of disappointment and annoyance.

"Extemporize something, my dear," answered Miss Wilde. "It is going to be a splendid affair. I'll help you all I can. The fact is, you look well in almost any dress. You're just the style."

"But I have promised to stay with aunt Allen."

"In order to let Mary go? I'd like to see you do that. You're not quite so foolish."

"You talk as though I had an invitation," said Jane.

"Because I saw one made out, and am dead sure, as our Harry would say, that it will be here within an hour or two. Send me word the moment it is received, and if our united wit and taste don't put you into splendid party trim by to-morrow evening, we are duller than I fancy."

Miss Wilde's visit was brief. On leaving her friend, she hurried off to the residence of Mrs. Barton. She was intimate with this lady.

"I have a favour to ask," she said.

"Name it."

"Send an invitation to Jane Ridgely."

"If you desire it, certainly; but it is so late that she will scarcely accept."

"I'll manage all that. She'll come."

"Very well."

Mrs. Barton took up a printed card of invitation, and slipping it into an envelope, wrote thereon the address of Miss Ridgely.

In less than half-an-hour the card was in the young lady's hands.

It was Tuesday morning, the day before the party. Mary Allen sat in her mother's room, at work on the dress to be worn next evening. She was making some alteration, and putting on new trimming.

Mrs. Allen had not been as well even as usual during the last few days, and was lying in bed. Every few minutes Mary would put down her work, in order to give some attention to the invalid. She had readjusted the pillows, that her mother might lie more easily, and resumed her seat by the window, when a note was handed to her by the servant.

As she read it, Mrs. Allen's eyes were on her face, and saw her countenance change—a shadow fell over it.

Mary sat very still, and seemed lost, after finishing the note.

"Whom is it from?" asked Mrs. Allen.

"From Jane."

Mary's voice did not betray any feeling, but it was lower than usual.

"What does she say?"

"That she is sorry to disappoint me, but cannot come to-morrow evening."

"Why?"

Mrs. Allen rose up in bed.

"She does not give the reason, but says that it will be impossible to come. So, that settles the party question." She sighed faintly; then, rallying herself, and affecting a cheerfulness she did not feel, added, "It's all for the best, no doubt. I'm only sorry to disappoint Captain Wilmot, since he was so polite; but it cannot be helped."

"It must be helped!" answered Mrs. Allen. "You shall go to this party, if I have to stay alone."

"The right way, mother, for every one, is the right way. You have not been so well for the last two or three days, and there has been a question in my mind about leaving you even with Jane. This note decides the question."

"I'll send for Mrs. Kennard," said the mother. "Now, don't object, for I have set my heart on you going, Mary."

"Mrs. Kennard! Why, mother dear, how can you think of her? I wouldn't trust you alone with her for a whole evening if I were to gain a kingdom. Don't think any more about it. The question, as I said just now, is settled. If, as you have declared so often, there is a Providence in each event of our lives, no matter how small or seemingly unimportant, there is a Providence in this; and my surest way to receive the highest good designed, is to meet it in a right spirit—that is, to do just what duty, conscience, and love dictate, and these all say, 'Remain at home with your mother!'"

Mary had risen from her seat by the window, and crossed the room. She now stood by the bed-side, and was gently pressing her mother back upon the pillows. Mrs. Allen shut her eyes, and looked sad and disappo-

intended.

She did not know how keenly the disappointment had touched Mary also, for the true-hearted girl was concealing what she felt for her mother's sake.

The dress upon which Mary had been working was put away, and a book, that she had been reading aloud the previous night, taken in its place.

It was impossible for Mary Allen to look forward to the hour when Captain Wilmot was to call for her, without uncomfortable sensations. She wished to appear well in his eyes—to stand fair with him. There was a feeling that his offer to accompany her to Mrs. Barton's was grounded in something deeper than a mere compliment. How would he regard her conduct?

The hour came at last. She heard the carriage that brought him stop at the door, heard the bell ring, and waited for his name or card to be sent up. Then she went down to meet him, feeling strangely ill at ease and embarrassed.

The look of disappointment, almost displeasure, that came into his face when she entered, dressed in a plain evening costume, hurt and confused her. But she controlled her disturbed feelings with a strong hand, and in a few quiet words offered the excuse of her mother's illness as a reason why she could not keep her engagement. She saw that Captain Wilmot was not satisfied, and hurt pride made her draw back, silent, cold, changed. Each felt uncomfortable and embarrassed.

After a few minutes the captain arose, and, with polite formality, retired. The instant Mary was alone, she covered her face with her hands, not able to restrain a gush of tears.

"Where is your *belle* companion?" asked Miss Wilde, on meeting Captain Wilmot at the party. She smiled into his face with an arch malignancy that threw a suspicion into his mind. The captain had sharp eyes, understood human nature, and was skilled in character-reading.

"Miss Allen, you mean?"

"Yes. I don't see her."

"She is not here."

"Aha! Didn't I prophesy as much?"

"Yes."

"Did you call for her?"

"I called."

"And she wasn't ready—had changed her mind! It isn't my fault if you were disappointed. Forewarned, forearmed, you know. You'll believe me touching her oddity, now, won't you?"

And she laughed archly. Some one drew her away, and the captain mingled with the company, feeling annoyed and uncomfortable. Had this girl really been trifling with him? Was the sick mother story, a mere subterfuge? He had been foreadvised of this very thing as probable. And yet there was something in the affair altogether out of harmony with his own estimate of Mary Allen's character, formed on brief observation.

"I am sorry my young friend, in whom you expressed so much interest, is not here to-night," said Mrs. Barton, speaking not long afterward with the captain.

"Miss Allen, you mean?"

"Yes. I received a note of regret from her this morning. Her mother is in a rapid decline, and Mary is her devoted nurse. They are very tenderly attached to each other. She says that her cousin had promised to take her place with her mother, while she came out this evening; but something had occurred to prevent the cousin from keeping her promise, and so it was impossible for her to leave home."

"This is the true reason, you think?" said the captain.

"The true reason?" Mrs. Barton seemed surprised at the question. "Of course it's the true reason! She could give none other."

"Isn't there something peculiar, something odd, about her?" asked the captain.

"She may be peculiar in some things; but her peculiarities are worthy of imitation. A truer, purer, sweeter, and more self-denying girl is not within the circle of my acquaintance."

"But I was warned of this very thing. Mrs. Barton told that she would disappoint, or rather trifle with me, as she had trifled with others."

"From whom came the warning?" Mrs. Barton grew serious.

"From Miss Wilde. I will be frank with you."

"Can this be possible?"

"It is just as I say."

"From Miss Wilde!" Mrs. Barton looked disturbed. Then angry spots burned on her cheeks. "I see it all now, captain," she added. "There has been a little plot to hurt Mary Allen in your good opinion. The cousin, who was to take her place in the mother's sick-chamber, is here. She is not one of my friends; but a young acquaintance asked me, two days ago, as a particular favour, to send her a card of invitation. I hardly thought she would come; but her acceptance is answered by her presence here to-night."

Two conflicting emotions instantly showed themselves in Captain Wilmot's face—pleasure and indignation.

"Your young acquaintance is Miss Wilde?" he said. "Yes."

"Thank you for having unveiled the truth. It is but just. I have wronged Miss Allen in my thoughts, and hurt her by coldness. You are not aware that I engaged to call for her this evening. Forewarned that she was odd and capricious, and might, from some whim, disappoint me, my feelings were a little disturbed on arrival. The very thing predicted came to pass. I was annoyed, and showed my annoyance. We parted coldly and formally."

"You understand it now?" said Mrs. Barton.

"I do, and shall act according to my new understanding of the case."

"How?"

"You will excuse my absence for an hour—perhaps altogether?"

"Certainly."

"Good evening. You shall hear from me, if not to-night, in the morning."

Mrs. Allen saw, by the sober face and moist eyes of her daughter, that the interview with Captain Wilmot had not been a pleasant one.

She asked a few questions, but Mary answered only in monosyllables, and then spoke of other things. A book that she had been reading aloud was taken up. An hour passed, when the front door-bell was rung.

Both mother and daughter listened without speaking. When the door opened, there followed the sound of a man's tread and a man's voice in the hall.

"Who can it be?" asked the mother. Mary did not answer, but her heart beat with a muffled sound. She felt oppressed, and was in a strange, half-tremulous suspense. The servant came in a few moments afterward. The card she handed to Mary bore the name of Captain Wilmot. She was not surprised; but she felt weak all over.

"The gentleman says, Miss Mary, that he will take 't as a particular favour, if you will see him for just a minute or two."

Mary did not hesitate. She handed the card to her mother, and then directed the servant to remain in the room until her return.

She did not glance into the mirror—made no adjustment of her dress—but went down to the parlour, walking with a slow, firm step, and schooling herself to calmness all the way.

The captain stood in the middle of the room, but advanced a few steps towards her, as she entered, holding out his hand.

"I am afraid, Miss Allen," he said, with a frank manner, "that you thought me rude and cold a little while ago, and I could not rest until I saw you again, in order to do away, if possible, with that impression. I was disappointed; for, to confess the truth, I had promised myself no ordinary pleasure in your society at Mrs. Barton's this evening; and it sometimes happens that we are not in a mood to bear disappointment gracefully. That was my misfortune to-night, and I offer an apology."

He had taken her hand, and he felt it tremble. At first she looked at him firmly; but her eyes soon dropped before his, and her face grew warm with blushes. He led her, unresisting, to a sofa, and took a place beside her, still keeping hold of her hand, and still perceiving its tremor. Why this agitation? Hearts are quick interpreters. It was the propitious moment—not looked for, but welcomed and accepted.

When Mary returned to her mother's room, an hour afterward—to the happy girl the minutes had fled like seconds—her face was paler than when she went out, but over it lay a veil of tender joy, subdued, but full of heart-revelings that no true mother's eyes could fail to read. She bent over the expectant invalid, gazing with love-lit eyes into her white, patient countenance, and then, hiding her own face on her bosom, whispered:

"I am very happy to-night, dearest, dearest mother!"

Not very long afterward, the fact of an engagement between the captain and plain Mary Allen transpired. This, to Miss Wilde, after all she had done in the case, was a mystery that perplexed and annoyed her. She had another feeling, one of shame, when Mrs. Barton, a woman of courage as well as honourable feeling, held to her eyes a mirror in which she saw herself reflected.

"You meant evil to a true-hearted and noble girl," she said; "but the shaft, designed for her, glanced aside, and hurt your own good name. It was not well done, my young friend; and, if you suffer in consequence, may the memory of pain, if no higher impulse rule in your spirit, hold you guarded in the future. There lies, in all wrong-doing, a germ of retribution, that will punish the wrong deed, sooner or later."

When plain Mary Allen became Mrs. Wilmot, brilliant, showy girls, like Miss Wilde, did not hesitate to announce themselves as puzzled. What could he have seen in her? they asked. "Ordinary," "plain," "homely," "dull," "commonplace," such were the terms applied. "Good, and true, and honourable—full of all soul-sweetness—a woman rightly planned," said Mrs. Barton, in answer to such poor cavillings. "True men seek for such to be their life-companions, and leave the proud, the vain, the showy, and frivolous, to mate with meaner natures. Accept the lesson, my young friends, and be wiser in future."

T. S. A.

ARTIFICIAL RAINBOW.—M. J. Duboseq has contrived for the French theatre a method of imitating the rainbow, of which Cosmos speaks very highly. He employs an electric light, obtained with the aid of 100 Bunsen elements. The first lenses of his optical apparatus render the rays from this source parallel, and transmute them through a rainbow-shaped hole in a screen to a double convex lens of very short focus, from which they pass to a prism, and emerge with sufficient divergence to make an effective rainbow on a screen about six yards off. This rainbow is said to be brilliant even when the whole scene is lit up.

THE SYMBOLISM OF COLOUR.—The colour of mourning at the death of near relatives is yellow in some Asiatic regions, and among the Quiches, in Guatemala;

brown, among the Persians; blue, among the Turks; white, among the Chinese, Annamese, and Siamese; the colour is dark blue in Elmina, and dark blue and black among the Quiches. The Australian, when in mourning, paints his white or draws merely a white line across his forehead, nose, or cheeks. The Omaha also use white paint when in mourning;

whilst among the natives of North America, black is generally the colour of mourning and red the colour of war. Among the Mandingoes, in the region of Sierra Leone, white is the symbol of peace. Among the Ashantees and other negro peoples, white is the

colour of joy, and they paint themselves white on their birthdays. Priests, ambassadors, and warriors are dressed in white among the Yebus. Persons who have gained a suit, or been acquitted of some crime, dress in white in some parts of Africa. The natives of Elmina, in opposition to the belief of other negro tribes, imagine the good god to be of white and the bad god to be of a black colour. Among the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego, white is the colour of war, red that of peace and friendship. Yellow, the favourite colour of the Malays and the lowest Hindoo castes, is, at the same time, the colour of priestly clothing among the Burmese.

THE BRICK END.

"IMPOSSIBLE! I'm beyond all superstition of that sort."

"Then you don't believe that the Brick End is haunted?"

"Haunted!"

A curl of the lip, a flash of the eye! Robert Wainwright was angry at what he called the folly of his cousin. The little lady insisted that she had seen strange sights in the Brick End.

There she sat, curled up in the great arm-chair, a dainty piece of humanity, shining in some rich silk of wonderful hue and pattern, a determined will speaking in her great blue eyes, her red lips parted, her tiny hands clenched, very much in the style of a pugilist of the nineteenth century. Such a man as Herbert she declared she never saw. He wouldn't believe things on the evidence of his own senses. There wasn't the shadow of ideality about him.

There was Dorothea, their servant girl, who couldn't write her name, went into trances, and spoke in French, German, and Greek; but he persisted in talking of psychology, and didn't believe it was the spirits a bit—no, not a bit of it. There never was such a man, and for the moment she almost hated him, because he wouldn't be convinced of the supernatural.

Now Mabel believed in almost all sorts of "isms" and "ologies." She disliked matter-of-fact people excessively, and her little brain was full of visions.

She had watched the Brick End many a time, daring to go by herself and look and listen in the cool summer evenings.

She was certain she had seen a light there, and had heard mysterious sounds; and to think her cousin should doubt her, and, worse still, laugh at her, made her lose all patience.

"Well, thank heaven, Andrew isn't a bit like you!" said she at length, drawing a long breath.

"No. Andrew is in love with you, and would not call anything in question that you believe, of course."

"Well, I am glad you are not," she said, in a poor.

"Perhaps I'm not sorry," was the laughing rejoinder.

But there came a shadow over his face as he spoke; an involuntary sigh rose to his lips, which he suppressed, however, as he cast an almost envious glance over to the rose-bud of a creature, who, had she known how constantly she had tortured him, would have enjoyed her triumph beyond all bounds. But she did not care for him, and so, of course, they were always quarrelling.

"Where's Bertha?" asked Herbert.

Mabel put her finger on her lip, and pointed to a shadowy corner.

The outlines of a young girl were dimly visible. She had thrown herself on an ottoman; her black curls threaded the hassock of crimson velvet which she had drawn under her head.

At that moment Dr. Wellesley came in—a young man, not long before a student—Mabel's lover. A fine figure, tall, slender, wide-shouldered, with hair and moustache light, almost as flaxen light as Mabel's.

"Ah, my darling!" he said, coaxingly, at the same time stealing a glance at the beautiful figure in the shadow, "what is the matter? Who has tormented you?"

"This surly cousin of mine," she answered. "He pretends to despise me, because I protest the Brick End is haunted."

"Why, Herbert! how can you be so unbelieving? You know the house has an exceedingly bad reputation, on account of the murder."

"Bah! What has the murder to do with the house?"

"Nobody will live there," cried Mabel, quickly; "nobody dare—not even poor people, who might have it for nothing. You know that."

"Yes, merely because such silly souls as you persist in keeping up the preposterous idea that the house is haunted."

"Silly! I dare say I'm silly in your eyes, you're so wise!" and Mabel pouted again.

But in a moment her eyes widened. She had caught a look from her cousin that, obtuse as she was, told her volumes. She almost caught her breath; it was the first time she had thought of such a thing.

The two men stood together now. Mabel compared them. Dr. Wellesley was twenty-four; Herbert, nearer thirty. The doctor's face and form I have described. Herbert was yet taller, broad and muscular in the shoulders; his beard was a beautiful glossy brown, almost patriarchal in length and profusion, rich and curling. His eyes were large, dark, and expressive; strength and repose marked the countenance that, in excitement, was a very flame, though in rest it looked massive rather than handsome.

Seeing all this for the first time, or rather comprehending that inner light that made the countenance what it was, it was no wonder that the volatile, unreasoning Mabel opened her eyes. Was she, then, beloved by two men?

By this time Bertha awakened from her sleep. (It was questionable whether she had been asleep.) She came forward with that velvet step of hers, and placed herself between Mabel and Dr. Wellesley. Her eyes and cheeks were feverishly bright; she had never looked so beautiful.

A new sense seemed to have been added to Mabel's consciousness. Bertha's eyes had sought those of Andrew, and when they met, fell, consciously. In the doctor's face was a sudden admiration. What did it mean? Had his heart gone from her in one short month? Suddenly she was conscious of a raging jealousy, and yet mingled with it was a contempt of the man she thought loved her so dearly—was all but engaged to her.

"What were you talking about?" asked Bertha. "I think I heard something about haunted houses."

"The Brick End," replied Mabel, turning away half-impatiently.

"Where poor uncle Hart was killed. I wonder who could have done the dreadful deed!" and Bertha stood thoughtfully looking down.

Bertha and Mabel were cousins; Mabel and Herbert only cousins through marriage; but Herbert had been in the same house with Mabel all her life. He had worshipped her silently long before she could be conscious that he even admired her.

"Do you believe the spirit can come back, Dr. Wellesley?" Bertha asked, lifting her dangerous eyes to his.

Now, he had often told Mabel that he did, for he fancied that one must never differ from the woman he loves. But Bertha was so different—more mature in judgment, cooler in argument—and yet he wished to please her, for the hypocrite was conscious that she had won him from his fancied preference to Mabel.

"Really," he replied, "sometimes I think—that is—I have not quite made up my mind on the subject. Ask Mabel what she thinks."

Mabel darted an angry glance at him—contemptuous, too.

"I think just as you have always professed to think till now," she said, with a stinging accent, and conscious that she could not hold out much longer, for the tears were coming.

She turned abruptly and left the room.

"How quick-tempered Mabel is!" exclaimed Bertha, with an artful pathos in voice and manner. "Hasn't she been dreadfully petted?"

Herbert heard no more. He, too, was filled with an undefinable anger towards those who seemed to conspire against Mabel's happiness.

"Puppy!" he muttered, between his shut teeth, shaking his clenched hand at the door after he had shut it. "He doesn't know his own mind two minutes at a time—and to think that she should love him!"

* * * * *

The subject was resumed when they were together again.

Mabel had obtained fresh evidence in her solitude of the afternoon, while Herbert was as much of a sceptic as ever.

"I have seen lights in the house, and some one moving round," she said, excitedly. "I have heard sounds like praying or muttering, for when none of you have known it, I have gone up there in the dark. I am not a coward."

And her glance went over to Dr. Wellesley, who sat with his long, spiral, Turkish pipe out of the window, smoking gently.

"Andrew, what would you say to a sojourn of one night at the Brick End?" called Herbert, rising from his recumbent position.

"Oh, horrible!" cried Bertha, who sat near Mabel, pretending to read, though the twilight was gathering. "I hope you won't either of you," she added, after a brief pause, "do such a foolhardy thing;" but her eyes were directed to Wellesley, who took the amber mouthpiece from between the amber flow of his moustache.

"I confess to a weakness for a good bed and com-

fortable quarters," he said, slowly, toying with his pipe. "However, if it will be a favour, I—of course, I'll go."

"Thank you, no; you may enjoy your bed. I'll go alone," said Herbert, throwing himself on the lounge again.

"I didn't want you to do that—I only wanted you to acknowledge that there might be something supernatural about it," said Mabel.

"What! agree with you against my own judgment? I have a higher opinion of woman, than to yield to her fancies because I think her incapable of using her reason; fancies!—I should have said views or convictions. I have no doubt you are as honest in assigning a supernatural reason, as I am in believing there is only a natural one. I shall not have the least hesitation in spending the night there. Give me a light, a book, and a pistol, and you need have no fear of the consequences. I believe the house is partly furnished, isn't it?"

Mabel answered with some little trepidation that it was. She already looked upon her cousin with different feelings.

His courage had made him a hero in her eyes; and there is nothing will gain a woman's heart quicker than true courage.

Dr. Wellesley had finished his pipe, stretched himself, and now arose from his seat and stood looking out.

The twilight had given way to the silvery lustre of a moon nearly full. The white, rolled walks beyond glistened like packed silver; the flowers, dim in colour but fragrant, were distinct in their beautiful outlines, moving gently in the faint breeze.

"It's an exceedingly delightful evening," said Dr. Wellesley, caressing his moustache. "Come, Mabel," and he turned slowly towards her, "get something to throw over your head, and let's walk."

"I'm not in the mood to walk to-night," she replied coldly. "Ask Bertha—she's very fond of the moon-light."

"I'll go, if Mabel will," was Bertha's uneasy rejoinder. In truth, she felt somewhat like a thief, knowing well, as she did, that she had used all her art to captivate Dr. Wellesley, and win him from Mabel.

"You may as well go, Bertha," said Mabel, indifferently, "for I intend to retire in a few minutes—my head aches."

"And then, you see, she has company," put in the doctor, a little malice in his voice.

"And good company, too," added Mabel, still commanding herself.

Bertha rose, shook the cloud of black rings back, as she threw over her head some fairy-like, foamy covering of white wool, and the two, well pleased with each other, left the room. Mabel looked after them with strained eyes. Herbert professed to be doing; but he could see from his corner—could see Mabel clasp her hands tightly, and then throw them forward, while a half-suppressed sob sounded on the stillness. It was in this way that Mabel threw the recreant lover from her; but Herbert thought she was in anguish, and for the moment felt as if he could shoot Dr. Wellesley. It was all his fault, if the other was a forward minx who made the most of her beauty, he thought. Would he, Herbert, have perjured himself? Would he have turned from that sweet face for all the bold beauties in Christendom? No—never! After a while, Mabel arose to leave the room. Herbert also arose. She turned as she heard him move.

"Are you in earnest about this?" she asked.

"I certainly am. I sleep or watch in the Brick End to-night."

"But somehow it makes me nervous to think of it," she persisted.

"It will be pleasant to me, perhaps, to think you are nervous on my account," was the reply.

"Nonsense!"

She laughed lightly; but the laugh sounded strangely to Herbert, and again he caught his teeth closing over the words, "That villain!"

"Bertha is very pretty and very graceful," she said, after a moment's pause, catching a glimpse of her from the window. "I wonder you didn't fall in love with her, Herbert."

"Me with her!" exclaimed the young man. "I should as soon fall in love with Dorothea down in the kitchen. Sooner, for I think she is a true-hearted girl; but Bertha! I could not respect her enough to love her. She is like clay in the hands of the potter—not like my little wilful Mabel, who—But what nonsense I am talking! You are angry with me, Mabel?"

"No, not angry; but I must go," and she hurriedly left the room.

The Brick End was an old house, nearly ten minutes' walk from the Glades, the property of Bertha's father. The family had once lived in the Brick End—Bertha, her father, and her stepmother

besides an old man, her own mother's brother, who was familiarly called by everybody, Uncle Hart.

Uncle Hart was somewhat avaricious, and given to hoarding gold, and counting it.

Bertha's stepmother had one son, a dark-browed youth, who had professed to love Bertha, but being refused by her, had left the house and gone no one knew whither. Six months after his disappearance, Uncle Hart was found dead in his bed, his strong box robbed, and many a valuable paper missing. From that day to this no clue had been obtained by which the murderer might be found.

Bertha's father had therefore deserted the house, having built a more modern edifice on another part of his grounds, and for two years the Brick End had been untenanted.

These fearful circumstances gave it, of course, a sickly interest in the neighbourhood. It was currently reported that the house was haunted, and therefore abandoned to decay.

Mabel, as she said, had often stolen down there, and affirmed that she had heard mysterious sounds and seen mysterious sights.

Herbert Wainwright was fully determined to cure her of this, to him, silly superstition; therefore he decided to pass the night in the Brick End.

Finding a key that would fit the door, he entered the house with a dark lantern, making no little noise as he did so. The hall was wide, gloomy, and destitute of furniture. The lower rooms were all open, and through these Herbert went cautiously before he ascended the stairs.

At last, having satisfied himself that they were empty, he began to ascend the staircase, and had nearly reached the top, when, to his surprise, and it must be confessed, horror too, he heard a deep, hollow groan. He stopped abruptly, his heart beating more rapidly than he had ever thought it could.

While pausing, the groan came again, more prolonged than before, coupled with the low moan of "Mother, mother!"

Still he stood there, uncertain what to do. He saw through the half-open door that there was a very dim light, that looked to him, in his then excited state, supernatural, and his courage almost failed him on a repetition of the same dismal groan, ending in a hollow whispering tone, the ghastly sound of which could not be expressed.

His first movement was to enter the room directly at the head of the stairs, which he knew communicated with the one in which the light was, and accordingly with noiseless steps he accomplished it.

The door was open a little way, admitting a small stream of light, something being placed against it on the other side.

He had hardly noticed this, set his lantern down and taken his pistol from his pocket, before he heard the outer door open again, and some one enter breathlessly, lock the door inside, exactly as he had done, and withdraw the key. Again his heart beat rapidly, and he prepared himself for an emergency. The rustle of garments was now heard, and a soft step ascending.

Stationing himself where he could command a part of the next room, he saw a woman enter, heard again the hollow groan, and the quick cry "Mother!"

"Ralph," said a voice that was familiar to his ear, and Bertha's stepmother threw off the light covering that hid her face, and went over to another part of the room.

"I couldn't come sooner, Ralph—they were walking in the garden. See; I've brought you some jelly, and the water isn't quite gone. I'll get you some fresh, before I go. Oh, Ralph, my boy—my poor boy!"

"Mother, I shall go mad here, another night," faltered the feeble voice. "You know something of my vileness, but not all—not half—or you would fly from me. Here, in this room—my God! how could I stay?—here Uncle Hart was killed—and—listen, then hate me—it was I who murdered him!"

A stifled scream—exclamation after exclamation of the wildest horror! It seemed as if reason were leaving the poor creature's brain.

"Oh! why did you tell me, Ralph?" she moaned; "why did you tell me?"

"Because I could not keep it any longer. Because I had rather be hung than go on suffering this way," he cried, fiercely. "It was strange I should wander here in my delirium—strange that I should throw myself here on this very blood-stained pallet. And when in my fever I crept out that night, and you saw me, it was just as strange that you should bring me here, where everything recalls that awful hour—his smothered cry for mercy—my fiendish purpose, not to be diverted. I tell you I feel as if I could rush out and through the streets, proclaiming my own vileness."

"Ralph, Ralph! be silent; you have broken my heart."

"Yes, for your husband's sake I should be silent—

for Mabel's sake, I know—for your good fame; yet it is well I have told you. God knows what I might else have done. But I have felt strangely to-day—sometimes I think I am dying; but it is a long while—a long while. He comes here—in the deep night—my poor old uncle, but he looks as if he had forgiven me."

Sobbings and low moans followed. The mother's heart in that hour must have broken. Then the door was shut, strangely enough, for she could not have known there was a listener there.

For a long while there was subdued talking; and then Mabel's stepmother went down the stairs, and came up again, Herbert judged, with water.

Another half-hour passed, and he was left alone with the sick man, and in possession of that horrible secret.

Early in the morning he contrived to meet Mabel. She started.

"Why, how pale you look. Did you see—"

"Mabel," he queried, excitedly, "have you told anyone—your father or mother—that I intended staying at the Brick End?"

She shook her head, not a little frightened at his manner.

"Then say nothing of it to any one. I ask it as a favour."

"Certainly not, if you wish it; but—"

"Can you wait, Mabel, if I do not wish, for good reasons, to tell you the result of my night's visit?"

"Of course I can," she said, but her countenance fell. She was sorely disappointed.

"Thank you, darling." He turned pale as he spoke. "Forgive me," he said. "I forgot that I have not the right to speak to you in that manner. Where is the doctor?"

"I don't know. Somewhere with Bertha, I presume."

"That cold, calculating, artful girl!" he cried, almost passionately.

"You need not anathematize her on my account," said Mabel, smiling faintly.

"Mabel," he said, for the first time in his life, acting upon the impulse of the moment, "do you love that man?"

"No, I do not," she said, softly.

"And you—you are no coquette?" he cried, in low, rapid tones. "Am I too vain to think—Oh! Mabel, I cannot say it."

She looked up at him, half-smiling. He could not but interpret that look.

"Herbert, are you afraid of me?"

"No, thank God!" was his eager exclamation. "Oh! if you knew how, for long, long years, I have loved you, so hopelessly."

"I do know," she whispered; "at least, I have divined it lately."

"Thank God!" he whispered, again and again—thank God!"

Strange perversity of human nature. When the doctor found he had lost Mabel, he could hardly contain himself for jealousy and anger. He left the house immediately; so that Mabel, if she had wished it, had her revenge in seeing the pale cheeks of Bertha, who was miserably piqued as well as unhappy.

That week, poor Ralph was brought home, to die. Herbert had been silent. It could do no good to accuse him now—his own remorse was anguish enough; so he kept his secret. After the funeral, Dr. Wellesley came back again, more magnificent in moustache than ever; and when he found that Mabel was engaged, he turned his attention to placing roses on the fading cheek of Bertha.

"Do you know," asked Mabel, one day, after Herbert had led her to the altar, "when I first began to love you?"

He acknowledged his ignorance.

"That night you were so firm in opposing my superstition, and said you would pass a night at the Brick End. Somehow, there came, all at once, a feeling in my heart that—that—"

"Resulted in making me the happiest man in the world," cried Herbert, catching her to his heart.

"Dr. Wellesley will be much happier with Bertha," she added, smiling. "He needs a strong-minded woman."

"I am satisfied," said Herbert.

M. A. D.

WILD ANIMALS AT COMPIEGNE.—In the forest of Compiègne last year, 10,931 ravenous and destructive animals were destroyed.

THE DANISH ARMY.—In the entire army of Alsen there is not a man who cannot read and write, and the mails are broken down by the mass of letters sent and received by the army. Most of the men, it must be remembered, are yeomen belonging to the reserves, small freeholders with whom Denmark is covered. Even those who cannot be considered friendly to the Danes still affirm that in Jutland there is no poverty;

that the entire people is one of the healthiest, best fed, and happiest in the world, with barns overflowing with produce and farms with stock and poultry. It is on this race that the South Germans, the Hungarians, and the motley savages who make up the Austrian army, are to be let loose. Marshal von Wrangel has informed the Danish General that he shall levy requisitions throughout Jutland, which means that the whole peninsula will be scientifically plundered. The country, we fear, is unfitted for guerrilla war; but every man in Jutland has been drilled, and this threat will recruit the Danish ranks more rapidly than a conscription.

THE RING-MARK;
OR, CHANGES AND COUNTERPARTS.

I WILL introduce to my readers the dramatic persons of my story thus:

General Manfred, long parted from his wife, but who had suddenly learned through the death of an enemy, that his repudiated love was stainless as the snow.

Ally Manfred, the general's only daughter, who after mourning her mother as dead, hears, through her father's remorse, that somewhere that mother is living still.

Antoine, a secretary, who has served the general faithfully for half a score of years.

Marie, ignorant of the fact that she is the general's niece.

Jean d'Alford, the lover of Ally Manfred.

The other characters will be developed in the course of the story.

For two years General Manfred had been located at Lucknow, India. His secretary, a Spanish-looking gentleman, remained at home with the family, which consisted of Ally and a young girl, Marie, who had been a governess in an English household for some years.

A pestilence had broken out in the district where these people resided, which had carried all but this poor orphan to the grave. The general, hearing of her illness and destitution, had her conveyed to his own residence, where, at the time my story opens she was slowly recovering.

Ally had been brought to Lucknow on account of her fatal inheritance. This was consumption.

For a few months the insidious disease seemed banished, but now it broke out in all its native virulence. At first she would not complain, and for a long time did herself injury by concealment.

Antoine, the handsome secretary, who watched over her with a brotherly solicitude, saw at last that she failed, and took upon himself the ordering of medical advice. Still she laughed at his fears, and would not let him inform her father.

"It is only a little cold, which I can easily cure," she said.

But on the following day came such a terrible lassitude that she nearly fainted at the breakfast-table.

"I thought it was such a little thing yesterday," she murmured. "I only felt chilly; but now—ah! there is something worse than a cold. It troubles me to breathe. Oh, Antoine! I wish my father was at home. Thinking of him in those terrible battles, frightens me. Perhaps it is that makes me ill."

The secretary marked with terror the deep discolouration of her eyes—the ahen cheek. But he strove at the same time to reassure her.

As tenderly as a brother he led her to a soft couch and placed her thereon, rang for cordials, despatched a servant to the surgeon's quarters, and endeavoured to dissipate her terrors and his own fears.

But a few nights ago, mirth and dancing, now—death, perhaps.

The surgeon lived on the outskirts of Lucknow. Kusth, a native, a Bengalee, was the servant sent on this errand.

A room, parted off by thin frames, over which linen was stretched, contained the gallipots, medicines and liquors needed by the service.

The apartment was cool and pleasant, looking upon vast gardens and orangeries.

Kusth, riding one of the general's horses, attired in his linen suit, but for his swarthy skin and gleaming black eyes, might have passed for a European, so well he sat in the saddle.

Nobody was in the surgery save Walla Ki Walls, a native whom Surgeon Ounslow had been educating for the past ten years.

He was a handsome Oriental, and made the best of his beauty. A bright red scarf was tied about his temples; another intermixed with green, of some glossy substance, was folded broadly about his waist. He adhered somewhat to the style of the native Indians of the higher rank in his dress, which was over-trimmed with radiant colours.

As he saw Kusth riding up to the door, he donned the dignity of his profession, and commenced smoking from a highly-scented chibouk, meanwhile rousing a sleepy little Bengalee servant to attend the door.

The child ushered in Kusth. Walls listened to him in dignified silence.

"His highness the doctor has gone for the day," he said. "There is great sickness in the regiment of the doctor sahib. But I also am a doctor, and his assistant—I will go with you. Remain you here while I put up medicines and speak to her highness the doctor's wife."

So Kusth threw himself down in the Oriental fashion and mused while the surgeon's assistant entered the presence of madame, the surgeon's wife.

Madame Ounslow had been in India fifteen years. She was an immense woman, but her face was very pretty, in spite of her excessive size.

Beside her sat a young girl to whom she had been a mother—a little English girl left an orphan in India when but a babe. Her own children, three in number, were at school in France, but the little Ella she had kept in a humble position, and educated at home.

"Well, Walla, what is the matter?" asked Madame Ounslow, lifting her eyes slowly to the handsome fellow. "Ah, Walla, your vanity will be the ruin of you—another costly head-dress!"

The man made a low salaam as he replied:

"I bought it of a travelling merchant who was selling out his wares cheap; it will last a long time. But some of the people who arrived yesterday call for the assistance of his highness, Sahib Ounslow."

"Indeed! I am sorry for that. The doctor told me last night that a very pretty young girl had arrived—they are all pretty when they first come," she added, a little spice in her voice, as she turned to Ella, the young girl, who smiled for a reply. "It is the great general's daughter—he whose victories we read of in the papers, my dear, and so a person of some consequence. Well, Walla, what shall we do? The doctor is absent—and she might die before he returns."

"His highness has trusted me," said the man, showing his white teeth.

"Yes, I know, in native cases, but he would be loth to tamper with a matter like this. And the poor young thing has no mother, I understand, and only one servant of her own race. It is really too sad. I wonder if I could get there?"

Walla Ki Walls surveyed her immense proportions for a moment, lifting his eyebrows expressively, but replied:

"Madame has only to order, and her slaves will obey."

"Is my palanquin in good condition?" she asked further.

Walla had heard nothing to the contrary.

"Then order it to be ready. I will carry some medicines myself, and you must ride Sultan. The poor young thing has no mother—I cannot help thinking of that. Besides, I wish to see for myself if she is so very beautiful," she murmured in an "aside." There are so few things occurring in that semi-sleeping life to move the stagnant waters of curiosity, that the slightest ripple makes all stir.

Madame Ounslow had found herself too unwieldy to attend the reception, knowing that her obesity was a natural cause for sly jokes and innuendoes; but she was not so sensitive when going on a mission of duty.

After some little time the palanquin was ready, and eight of the stoutest servants in attendance, who surveyed their allotted task with rueful faces. Every thing being arranged, they took up the line of march. Walla riding before Kusth, as became his rank, and the enormously heavy palanquin being borne up in the sinewy arms of the natives, who had much ado to keep it from trailing on the ground.

Walla carried a little box studded with brass nails containing his medicines, and felt himself of vast importance, mounted as he was on the doctor's favourite horse, Sultan.

They had accomplished two-thirds of their journey, when there was a great cloud of dust and a shrill cry. Walla stopped his horse. Kusth reined in.

For a few moments they had been going in advance of the palanquin. Now they turned to behold it lifted slowly, high in the air by eight pairs of arms, while sitting with a rueful countenance in the middle of the road was the fat wife of the doctor, talking volubly, and resting undignifiedly on the ruins of the palanquin floor.

Here was a dilemma, and how was it to be obviated? Here lay the broken palanquin, and there madame, who found it impossible to rise without assistance, exhausted her passion in scolding the servants. Kusth came to the rescue, and suggested that they should gather saplings and make a new floor.

"Meantime, I am to broil here in the sun, I suppose," cried madame, angrily.

"And, of course, there is no way to support the immense weight without the assistance of the carpenter."

era," said Walla, keeping his countenance with great difficulty. "Madame might tumble through again."

At length, he hit upon a plan. It was to mount Madame Ounslow upon Sultan; but how to manage him?

The horse might be restive, and a plunge from his back might be productive of serious results. Something must be done, however.

Madame was seriously red in the face. With the assistance of her servants, she was raised from the ground—her green satin dress, upon which she prided herself, stained with dust; and, after a great deal of difficulty, she mounted the horse, using her servants for stepping-stones.

In her youth, she had been a great horse-woman, but her obesity rendered her riding a great difficulty. The horse resisted his ponderous burden for a few minutes; then, Walla taking him by the reins, while four of the slaves carried the palanquin at its utmost height over the head of the fair but fat lady, they managed, with some difficulty, to gain the general's Indian home.

It was a ludicrous sight! Madame came in, her great straw hat flapping—her green dress inflated on either side like a pair of wings.

Maud, one of the English servants, who was looking from one of the windows, cried out with terror, then sank down, helpless with laughter.

The servants ran for chairs, and, with their aid, Madame Ounslow was soon on Indian *terra firma*.

"I believe I will never try to do a good deed again when it involves a journey," said the poor woman, as she sat in the hall of entrance.

A side door opened, and the stately secretary, Antoine, came out.

"I am the doctor's wife," she said, as he stood before her. "I pitied the girl, poor thing, because she has no mother, and as the doctor has gone to remain all day, I thought I would come; I broke down, however, on the way, and I'm not sure but you will have to keep me."

All sensations of a ludicrous nature were merged into gratitude as the secretary heard this little speech.

"I cannot thank you too much," he said, "for your unselfish kindness towards Mademoiselle Manfred. Permit me to order you refreshments."

A few minutes elapsed and a plentiful luncheon was set before her, while Walla went in to give his professional opinion, and pompously exhibit his medicines.

Ally was quite comfortable now. There was a slight moisture on the skin which Walla pronounced favourable, and thought with the right kind of attention the fever symptoms might be got over with no serious consequences to the patient.

Presently madame, *le docteur's* wife, came in and sat herself ponderously down by the fragile creature. Ally, who had heard of her mission from her father's secretary, thanked her for her kindness; and the doctor's wife said to herself, "Well, we really have a beauty here at last, after so many disappointments!"

She grew quite entertaining; and as her face was full of dimples, Ally loved to look at her, notwithstanding her immense size.

"Child, your face puts me in mind of a sweet little face I once saw in Calcutta," she said, after fanning herself gravely for half-an-hour. "Doctor had a post there then; let me see—it must have been ten or twelve years ago. One Lieutenant Manfred—a fine-looking officer—had brought his wife with him, and the little Elsie was born in India. Have you any relatives, dear?"

"I think papa has spoken once in a great while of a brother of his who died in India, but I didn't recollect he said he left a daughter. I know he was very angry with him."

"Ah, that was because of his marriage; but there was a child, my dear, and I've often wondered what became of her. Now I think, Lieutenant Manfred was like your papa, the general, only quite slim, and not very strong. His wife told me that consumption ran in the family on her husband's side. Does it, my dear?"

"I really don't know. I think, however, nurse Peiry said that I was as delicate as my grandmamma Manfred, who died very young. I suppose it must have been of consumption."

"Ah, what a pity!" exclaimed the doctor's wife, gazing sadly on the hectic that brightened the young girl's cheeks. "Well, well, we won't talk of that now—only, surely, there was a very pretty little girl, and she must have been your cousin. I heard that the marriage had been considered a *mesalliance*—that the Lieutenant's friends were very angry at him; and indeed, my dear, though she was a dear, good soul, as far as disposition and heart went, she was hardly to be called a lady, you know. But there, perhaps, we judge the people too harshly that are not like us, you know, my dear."

And madame leaned with a porpoise motion against the back of her chair, while Ally, too well-bred to smile, amused her attention by counting the figures on her fan.

"Walla!" called the lady, to the handsome native, who was also trying to attract Miss Ally's attention by frequent entrances, "let me know exactly what you have given the young lady, so as to tell the doctor when he comes this evening. For, with your consent, mademoiselle, I intend to stay all night. You don't know, dear, how awfully dull it is here, after one gets used to the flowers, the curious things, and the natives. When I first came here, it was nothing but wonder, wonder, wonder at everybody, and the strange foreign ways and talk; but now it's an old story."

"After the lieutenant died—I suppose he was my uncle," said Ally, reflectively—"did the little girl and her mother go back home?"

"Yes, my dear; and I was really very sorry to lose them. I had become interested, what with going to the Zayat, where he was stopping when he was taken sick, and what with having them all removed to our quarters, as the doctor insisted. Poor fellow, he only lived a month after that. He spoke of his brother; but, bless you, the general was not in India then, and had not been for a year. How well I remember that pretty, sunny little Elsie. Her mother showed great taste in dressing her, I must confess, and the child always seemed like a little angel, with wide, soft ribbons floating from her waist and shoulders."

"My poor little cousin," said Ally, softly; "how I wish I knew about her."

"She would be so sweet a companion for you, now, for she must have grown up very pretty and lady-like, I fancy. She had all her father's ways; I always called her the little lady."

"Whereabouts in France did she go back to, I wonder?" queried Ally.

"To St. Paul, dear; a seaport town."

"St. Paul!" cried Ally, starting.

"Yes, my dear; I remember as if it were only yesterday, how very sweet the widow's face looked, under her new black veil. I bought the veil for her myself. I believe I get it cheap on account of a very small flaw somewhere; it was not seen, however. She told me then that she had engaged passage for herself and child back to France, and intended to settle, she said, in St. Paul, where she was born; that she should set up a small shop. *Mon Dieu!* how it horrified me! 'You must bring that child up a lady,' I said to her. 'I will bring her up to be good and virtuous,' she replied, which, considering, was a very good answer, after all; and no doubt she did."

"Then I must have a cousin in St. Paul," said Ally, quite excited, now. "I wonder if papa knew it, or Jean; Jean came from St. Paul, or very near."

And is Jean that magnificient-looking gentleman, with ruffles? very aristocratic he seems, too. Who he be? If I may be so bold as to ask."

"Oh, no; that is papa's private secretary. He is not quite well, yet, having but just recovered from a very severe illness on ship-board."

"Oh, papa's private secretary; a very handsome young man. But Jean, have I ever seen him?"

"No; Jean went with papa to the war."

"Ah! did he? Jean is a military gentleman then, I suspect?"

"Yes, madame, a captain, and one of papa's staff; He lived quite near St. Paul. I wonder—oh, I do wonder if he ever heard of or knew my cousin? But it seems so strange that papa never spoke of it."

"Your papa, my dear, is said to be the busiest man in Europe. I have often heard the doctor make that remark."

Just then Maud entered upon some trifling errand from the sick-room.

"And who is that, my dear?" asked the free and easy Madame Ounsow, after an almost direct stare.

"That is my attendant, madame," was the reply.

"Oh!" cried madame, shrugging her shoulders; "too pretty, by far. My dear, we do not often see such fresh faces; if she should play her cards right, she may live a lady in India all her life. Upon my word, she is very pretty; have you any more?"

"Another young lady up-stairs," said Ally, much amused—"a lady we found ill on our passage. Ah! that was a fearful sight!"

And she shuddered.

"Well, dear, don't talk of anything fearful while I am with you. I wish to soothe you, you know, and draw your mind from your own ills. That is the way I have kept my health; I never allow myself to think of disease. Ten years ago the doctor said something ailed my heart. If I had been frightened, no doubt I should have died long ago; but I'm a sort of fatalist, my dear. Oh, well, says I, I can't die till my time comes, any way, so I'll not think about it; and I didn't; and here I am, fat and hearty," she added, laughing good-humouredly at her own joke.

"But, my dear child, your eyes are heavy; don't let me keep you awake."

Lifting herself, she smoothed down the pillows nicely, and walked ponderously out of the room into the hall, where she went peering about, and almost stumbled over the handsome secretary.

"She's a very nice young lady, indeed!" said the doctor's wife. "Which of you is she going to marry?"

The secretary was taken somewhat aback at the question, but he managed to stammer out:

"Not me, most decidedly."

"Ah! I thought if she were you would not look so gloomy. Is it the captain, then? Why did they bring her to this frightful climate—frightful for such as she, I mean? She never will stand it—her uncle could not."

"Her uncle, madame?"

"Yes, Lieutenant Manfred. I daresay you never heard of him, the general is so reticent. I have been in company with him a whole evening, and he has not spoken two words to my knowledge. By the way, have you known the general long?"

"For some time, madame."

"Very cunning, indeed!" and she tapped him with her fan. "That may mean two years, and it may mean twenty. However, you look too young to be a very old acquaintance; but pray tell me, did you ever see his wife?"

"His wife?" ejaculated the secretary.

"Why—yes. You know he must have had one; or was it as I have heard—"

"He had a wife, madame."

"Merci! you needn't speak with so much accent. Well, when did she die? This poor child says she is motherless."

"I have never heard," said the secretary, gravely.

"Of course not from the general. He can be dumb, as I know. But pardon me, if I am too inquisitive. If you knew what a tiresome life it is! A new arrival is like an earthquake."

"So I presume, madame."

"I think you are a very old young man," said madame, quietly.

"Thank you; but I am not yet very wise," was the smiling reply.

"Much too handsome to be wise," she said, shaking her head. "Well, well, you men are all a mystery. Where is that sick young lady?"

He pointed the way to her room, and madame went in with an elephantine force that quite startled the invalid.

"There, now, don't be frightened; I'm the doctor's wife, and visiting all the sick people round here. Why, you are very pale, my dear, do you drink port wine?"

"A little," said the girl.

"You should drink a great deal. At your age, in your weakness, port wine is life. Why, look at me. I should never be in so much health this hour, but for port wine."

The invalid smiled; it was almost the first effortless smile she had indulged in for weeks.

"There, it's always a good sign, doctor says, when he gets his patient laughing. Why, you ought to get well and see the country. India is a great place for new-comers."

"I was born in India, madame."

"Ah!" madame stopped short, and indulged in a few superfluous breaths. "And so you were born in India, my dear? Pray, what part?—and what is your name, and who was your mother?"

The girl flushed; possibly she regretted her precipitancy.

"I am too languid to talk," she said; "some other time."

"Oh, certainly, my dear; but if you were born within a hundred miles of here, I ought to know you; by-the-bye, I have a register of all the English births and deaths in India, for the last twenty years. Now, my dear, you must tell me sometime, won't you?"

"I promise you I will," said the invalid, gratefully.

"And at present, only your name."

"You may call me Marie."

"Ah! some secret, as I thought; now, my dear, if you would but give me your proper name."

Marie shook her head.

"You were ill on the voyage, I am told?"

"Very, very ill, madame."

Madame caught her breath again; her eyes grew wild, she shut her lips tightly.

"Your hand is wasted, my dear, but there is a sign of returning health which I know. Give me your hand."

Marie offered her hand.

"Not that one," said the doctor's wife, quietly.

"It is customary to offer the right hand," said Marie, blushing violently.

"But fortune-tellers, I believe, require the left, the one nearest the heart. You will oblige me. I learned the art from the East Indian sorcerers. Don't start, dear, it's a hard name, but they're a very innocent

sort of people." Marie reluctantly held out the left hand.

"The life-line is very uniform," said the doctor's wife, in whose huge palm the little white, helpless fingers lay; "there are to be very few crosses in your lot, my dear, the worst are got over. Ah, there is a lover, and some disappointment—there always is some disappointment, my dear. You would never imagine what mountains of difficulties my dear doctor and I had to conquer, before we were married; but your course of true love runs smooth, after it is crossed with a death. There now, don't shiver so, it's not your death; it's no kin to you whatever, and you may not even know it. So cheer up. But I see the mark of a ring on the wedding-finger, my dear."

"Oh, no, there has never been a ring there," said Marie, striving to withdraw her hand.

"Wait a moment, my dear; you are quite too weak to have your way, this time. I thought it was a mark. I have seen just such a one before."

"You!" cried Marie, beginning to tremble violently. "I—I don't want you—I—think you must be mistaken."

"There, there, my poor girl, now don't go worrying; though doctor says that is better than being entirely passive. Indeed, I have known him to get his patients quite excited and angry, while he has been enjoying a quiet laugh at them in his sleeve all the time. A little storm, my dear, purifies the air. I'm very large, I know, but I can keep a secret, which all good-natured people cannot do. Now you are quiet again, and I'll let you alone till you tell me I may speak. But remember I have seen that same mark, and putting this and that together, I think, my dear, it was on the same finger. But there, I won't go on troubling you. You've nothing to do but get well, and as your father was a Mason, you will find friends enough. There, dear, how imprudent I have been to be sure—but it was only a slip of the tongue; I'll mend it by silence. I'm quite sure Providence sent me, that's all. If I were a heathen I should think so."

Without another word she was gone. Marie lay silent, thinking and trembling. Thus had her sad fortune culminated, and in sending this new foil, fate was about to inflict another trial. Repeated disappointments had made Marie sceptical. She had almost lost the simple faith in which she had been educated. She felt sometimes as if God had deserted her.

Now the sorrow took the shape of Jean d'Alford. She despised herself for loving, but how could she help it? Lying there, pale and wasted on the lounge, she had had nothing to do but watch his handsome face as he read to her, and to suppress the scalding tear when she marked his devotion to Ally Manfred.

"If I could only die!" how often the words had wailed through her pale lips, but she did not die, and life seemed one long, lingering sorrow.

Meantime this handsome Jean was busy with his military duties, thinking only of Ally when his arduous labours permitted.

The general loved him already as a son. One day the general read his letters with a pale face, then sat for some moments buried in thought.

"Do you write to-night?" he asked of Jean. The latter had received a pretty little missive from Ally.

"Certainly I shall," was the reply.

"Perhaps," said the general, reflectively, "you had better not speak of the coming engagement."

"I shall say nothing about it, general."

"It seems my daughter has been ill," said the latter, the muscle about his mouth working a little.

"It is nothing that appears to trouble her, however," said Jean, gaily, "most new-comers are ill sometimes, I believe."

"Yes," said the general, and rising, he paced the narrow floor, but he took the letters up first and put them carefully away, saying, in an undertone:

"I cannot mar his happiness, poor fellow; and as for me, heaven has ordained that there shall be nothing between me and country. God's will be done!"

The letter which had caused him this uneasiness was one written by Surgeon Ounsow, and contained the following information:

"I think it best that I should tell you plainly the threatened danger to your child's life, which I fear I cannot avert. She inherits from your family a tendency to consumption, and within the last few days the symptoms are very unfavourable. I trusted she would have a run of the fever, which, in constitutions of that tendency, sometimes keeps off the disease by entering other channels and attracting it there; but her symptoms are, I candidly confess to you, most dangerous. She is languid and strong by turns, but the languor increases. I watch over her constantly, having for the present taken quarters at your house. My wife is also here, and everything will be done for her health and happiness that can be. She does not say much, but I can see that she thinks seriously of her own symptoms. Her sweetness and pious resig-

nation are most touching in one so young. I am very sorry, my dear general, to be the means of so shocking your affectionate heart, but I know you too well to believe that you wish for unnecessary tenderness in such matters. May God speed and comfort you is the wish of Yours, HENRY OUNSLAW."

This was what the general had determined not to show Jean, knowing that, on the eve of an engagement as they were, the least depressing influence might react unhappily, when every nerve needed extra tension; therefore, Captain Jean went into his first engagement with unabated spirits, and, as the general foresaw, exhibited a courage and coolness that were remarkable in one unused to the smoke and carnage of the battle-field.

The surgeon wrote that sad letter sitting near the couch of the sick girl.

He had just come from a conference with the secretary, who, tremulous and dispirited, had begged to know the worst.

"The young lady must die, sir!" said the surgeon, not without some emotion, for he conjectured that the case before him was one of hopeless love.

The secretary was standing near a table, leaning upon one hand. His strength seemed suddenly to forsake him at this announcement; he leaned back, and fell rather than sank into the chair that stood there.

"Oh! sir," said the secretary, in a voice that caused the doctor to start, "this news is hard to bear. I cannot tell you how hard, though I have foreseen it for weeks; yet I have tried to cheat myself into the belief that it was an ordinary illness, which attacks those unused to the climate. Sir, I request your forbearance and your attention."

He seemed now more than usually affected. His head sank within his palms, and dry, harsh sobs smote the air.

The doctor stood astonished.

"Surely," he thought, "this is a case of the most absorbing affection. The poor fellow has very likely used some artifice for which he repents. Heaven help him if he has hastened her death!"

"I have to confess to you, sir," sobbed the low voice, the face still hidden in the locked palms, "that I am a woman!"

The doctor sprang to his feet. He was a profane man on occasions, and used a word more energetic than polite, as he stood there looking down upon the covering form as if it were some wild animal.

"And, alas! I am her mother," added the seeming man.

"The Dickens you are; then all I've got to say is, you're a remarkably good hand at deception." She raised her head with a look that touched him. "I beg your pardon, sir—madam, I mean," said the blunt doctor; "but, upon my word, I never was so cleverly taken in in my life; but, I don't understand it—it's completely beyond me. I heard years ago that the general's wife was dead."

"There were circumstances, sir, which I shall not now explain, that shut me from society as completely as if the tomb had closed over me. Heaven, in its goodness, has given me vindication, and were the general hero I should be received as one from the dead, and I doubt not with all the enthusiasm of his rash but noble nature. But, sir, time flies; every moment is precious. My child requires a mother's care—a mother's unwearied devotion. I wish for your assistance, and that of Madame Ounslaw, to whom I cannot feel too grateful for the kind attention she has bestowed upon my child. You see how I have stained my skin, and she bears a white arm that shone in startling contrast to the olive darkness of her hands and face. There is an alkali that will remove this colouring, which I have no doubt you possess. Unluckily I left it behind me in France."

"I'll see to that," said the doctor.

"In the next place you must prepare my child to see me. Tell her I have followed her here; that I am fully worthy of her love she knows, for it is probable the general has exonerated me since that terrible time," and again she hid her face in her hands, while her whole frame shook as with an ague fit.

"My dear madam," said the doctor, in a softer tone, "Rely upon me. I will serve you to the extent of my ability. Pardon me if I have been too much astonished to be polite, or to fathom the depth of your sorrow. Shall I call Madame Ounslaw?"

With an affirmative gesture, she passed into her room, and the doctor stood for a moment, quite lost in reverie; then he sought among his compounds the chemical preparation needed by his fair confidante.

When he returned to his charge she was sleeping. The room in which she had danced on more than one gala night, had been appropriated to her.

The lounge which was very large, and from which she could often be carried to another which stood near, was covered with a soft, silken fabric, against which the golden gleam of her hair, and the fair, angel-like face seemed like a sweet spiritual painting delineated

by some holy enthusiast; so soft, so hushed, so subdued was its ethereal beauty. The doctor stood for a moment spell-bound.

"She was too gentle and too lovely for this life," he said, then bent down as her lips moved.

"Mother, mother!" was the soft murmur.

"Poor child!" murmured the doctor, "she believes she shall see her mother in heaven." At that moment the girl's eyes flew open—these beautiful, veiled eyes. She smiled as she met the doctor's sympathetic glance.

"I was dreaming," she said.

"Of your mother?"

"Yes," she whispered, with a glance of surprise and pleasure. "Poor mamma! she was very unhappy. If she only could have lived! It would have been such a consolation to papa, if—if—I—" she glanced again pleadingly at the doctor.

"Oh, nonsense—nonsense; we must not think of these things," he said, with a seeming gaiety.

"Oh! yes, we must, doctor; there comes a time when it is forced upon us," was the quiet reply.

"And you, my little one, can you look upon it?"

"Upon death, you mean? More calmly than I dared believe a little time ago. It is not as very long at the longest, one's life. I used to think, when I read of great heroes (I call women heroes when they do deeds worthy of the name), that I should like to die in some such way. And I am proud of Rouen, my beautiful home, that I shall never see any more, because it was the place where Joan of Arc met with a triumphant death. Tell papa and Jean that I know I shall come back and see them," she added, in a simple and pathetic manner, that brought tears to the doctor's eyes.

"My little one," he said, tenderly, after she had been silent for a long time by his direction, "you spoke of your mother?"

"My beautiful, innocent mother!" murmured Ally, her lips quivering.

"You believe her dead?"

"I saw her die—that is—"

Ally clasped her hands, while an eager wonder beamed out of her large eyes.

"You thought you saw her," said the doctor, with marked emphasis.

"It is true—I did not know," cried Ally, half gasping and growing whiter—I saw the frightful flash—and papa—the pistol—oh! I don't like to think of it. And yet—I never knew she was dead," she added, calming herself, as she saw the look of alarm in the doctor's face as he rose from his seat to come towards her with an anodyne in his hand. "Don't be afraid," she said, smiling like an angel. "It will make me very happy to know she lives, even though I may never see her."

"My child—as you control yourself so admirably, listen. Your mother has followed you to India. She is this minute, under this roof."

Now shone out that remarkable sweetness of soul with which heaven has gifted some. Ally did not faint, or scream. Her pure heart was all too serenely thankful; it pervaded her frame with strength, instead of weakness.

"Ah," she said, looking at the doctor through tears that made her eyes more tender, "I am very happy."

"And you will be very calm when I bring her here?"

"I promise you I will; it would be beautiful to have Jean and papa here, too; but we cannot have everything, you know."

Hardly had she spoke when the doctor touched a spring that communicated with the other rooms. A minute had scarcely elapsed when the door opened slowly, and Ally, moist electric sparks glistening in her beautiful eyes, beheld again what had been to her an immortal resemblance. The same noble and classic face, about which hung folds of cambric, as if she had taken the vows of some Order of Mercy; the same majestic form, still looking fresh, charming and youthful, though the sadness of her face told of her lithesome unblushing life.

She went forward quickly, an eager anticipation in her tearful eyes. She fell down beside the couch containing so strong yet so frail a being. She gathered the beautiful form in her loving arms, concentrating in their embrace the enduring love of sixteen lonely years, and held it against her throbbing heart, speechless.

"Oh! mamma, let me look at you! I am so glad to feel that I shall not die alone, for you must give me up very soon, dearest."

"I have learned to give up," murmured the woman, her pale lips quivering.

"But, mamma, remember you will have papa to console you, for you did not know, perhaps—but he has found it all out—and oh! he is so sorry. Does Marie know?—and Antoine, where is he? His kind faithful heart will rejoice with me."

"Ally, look at me, child; do you not suspect—did you never suspect—"

The girl gazed at her in wild uncertainty.

"That you—you yourself—were the secretary? Oh! mamma—is it possible? It bewilders me. Yes, I know now why I trusted him so. I did not love him as I love poor Jean, but I would have believed and honoured him against all the world. Oh! mamma, what a romance! why is not papa here this moment?"

The door opened again at a signal, and the elephantine Madame Ounslaw entered, sustaining with one portly arm the wasted figure of Marie, who for the first time had left her room.

Ally's eyes glistened at sight of her friend. She held out her little hand that was not wasted, but transparent and hot to the touch.

"You are so good to come to me," she said; "I tried to get into your room, but I am a baby now, that cannot walk. How pretty you are!" she went on, childishly, as Marie after kissing her sank wearily on the lounge. "Mamma, don't you see her hair is just the colour of mine?"

The doctor's wife turned towards her husband with a significant glance.

"She shall stay with you, mamma, and be a second child to you," continued Ally, gazing fondly into the face of her mother, "you will love her, I know, and cherish her for my sake. She has no father—no mother—she must be an orphan no longer."

Marie hid her face, quite overcome, and wept. Madame Manfred had scarcely gazed at her before, so engrossed was she with her child, but when all had grown calmer, she turned to where Marie sat, and started at the sight of her flushed face.

For the excitement had driven a rich colour to the cheeks of the stranger, and her eyes were as softly blue as Ally's own. Madame Ounslaw seemed ever on the point of making some revelation, but her husband forbade her.

"There has been excitement enough for one day," he said.

So Madame Manfred thought to herself, "who can she be to look so like my Ally?" and setting it down as a mere coincidence, let it pass.

Every day she was devoted to her child, every night she was ready to apply the cooling water, or moisten the parched lips. As often as Jean sent merry letters, she read them to Ally, who listened with calmness, and sometimes with smiles. At last there seemed to come a reaction.

Ally sat up, and was carried out on the verandah in the shadows of the vines, where she ate cooling oranges plucked from the tree within her hand's reach. Her voice grew stronger, and her eye steadier in its light. The hectic no longer touched her cheek with its crimson death-fingers.

Intelligence was sent to the general and Jean, and for the first time the latter was told that she had been near to death. Even now his heart trembled at one line in the doctor's otherwise hopeful letter:

"I have known patients to revive in this manner, and suddenly die; but I trust this is a permanent recovery."

She might have lived long—months perhaps; but there came a shock too great for her to bear. General Manfred was killed in the shock of battle. The flush of coming health died out of her face, and never came back again. Slowly and surely she faded. Not even Jean's letters revived her, and no one had the heart to tell him how ill she was.

One day Marie sat by her side on the piazza. The doctor's wife, who still remained, came in, and seated herself near Ally, fanning her flushed cheeks.

"My dear," she said, "I've something to tell you. It is good, but I fear you cannot bear it?"

"Yes, I promise you I will," she said, softly.

"You remember that I spoke of your cousin who was born in India?"

"Oh, yes!"

The girl's eyes sparkled.

"Come here, Marie," said Mrs. Ounslaw. "My child," she continued, taking the hand of the last-mentioned, "your cousin had a strange mark on the second finger of her left hand—a ring-mark, like this?"

A great cry burst from Ally's pale lips. Marie trembled, though she had been told before.

"And that is why poor mamma said that if she was well she should not know us apart. Oh! how glad I am for Jean's sake!"

Marie—now Elsie, flushed painfully.

"And why for his sake, darling?" asked the doctor's wife.

"She will remind him of me; he will love her at least, like a very dear sister," she said, faintly. "Come here, my sweet cousin—we look alike, but you are a great deal more beautiful than I. I loved you from the first."

There was a corpse in the house—then a funeral service—but of all this Jean was profoundly ignorant. Madame Manfred moved about, pale and wan in her saable robes.

It was some time before she could accustom herself to the sight of Elise, so forcibly did she remind her of her lost darling. Bereaved and widowed, she spent her days in solitude.

Jean came home unexpectedly. He hurried into the room.

"In black—darling Ally!" he cried, sorrow and joy in his tones—"ah! you cannot mourn her more than I did." Was it possible? Elsie hid her face. Her heart throbbed almost to bursting. He thought it was grief,—went forward, much affected, and endeavoured to place his arm about her. Why did she resist? It was not like his gentle, childlike betrothed.

"Ally," he said, softly—"Ally, let us weep together."

"I am not your Ally," sobbed a gentle voice.

"Notmine—what is the meaning of this language?"

"I mean that I am not Ally. Look at me well—her eyes fell, her lips quivered at his devoted glance—"I am Elsie—only her cousin."

"Great heaven!—her counterpart, you mean. But where is my love—what?" He saw the ashy pallor, the convulsive movement—which he could interpret in but one way. He staggered back, almost bereft of life.

"She was so ill when the news came," whispered Elsie. "It must have broken her heart."

The young man's grief was very quiet. How could it be otherwise when every look, every gesture of this beautiful girl, seemed to bring him Ally's very self?

Months of gentle sorrow passed before he dared to whisper to himself how quietly his love had been transferred to this lovely counterpart.

At last, however there was a quiet wedding, at which were present only the surgeon and his wife, and a tall, queenly woman dressed in black—robed in ineffaceable sorrow—the widow of the noble general who had fallen fighting for his country.

And the orphan who had seen so chequered a life was happy at last.

M. A. D.

MARVELS OF SCIENCE.

In a recent lecture delivered by Professor Doremus, we find some very interesting facts in natural science, stated in a forcible and familiar manner. On the subject which is the best understood of all the imponderable agencies—Heat, the professor said:

SOURCES OF HEAT.—Our principal source of heat is the sun. It is calculated that the amount of heat which the earth receives from the sun in a year would melt a body of ice, 100 feet thick enveloping the whole earth. But the most surprising fact is the amount of heat that we receive from the stars. While the heat from the moon can be detected only by the most delicate instruments, and while the heat from a single star is insignificant, the combined heat from all of the stars amounts to four-fifths of that which we receive from the sun—or enough to melt a mass of ice enveloping the earth to the depth of about 80 feet! Another source of heat is the molten interior of the earth. As we penetrate the earth's crust we shall find that the temperature increases about 1.8 deg. for every 100 feet. This rate would give us, at the depth of 50 miles, a temperature which would melt most rocks. But allowing the solid crust to be 100 miles in thickness, then if I had a globe 80 inches in diameter, about the distance that I can hold my hand above the floor, the solid crust would be represented by a shell one inch in thickness. Another source of heat is chemical affinity.

LATENT HEAT.—The principle of latent heat was discovered by Dr. Black, of Glasgow. If a mass of ice, at the temperature of zero, Fahrenheit, is brought into a room, the temperature of which is so adjusted that it will warm the ice at the rate of one deg. a minute, the ice will grow warmer at this rate for 32 minutes until it reaches the temperature of 32 deg. above zero. The rise of the temperature will then stop, and it will remain at 32 deg. for 142 minutes, during which time the ice will be melted. The 142 deg. of heat which the water absorbs in changing from the liquid to the solid state is concealed—not manifesting itself to the senses or to the thermometer; it is therefore appropriately called hidden or latent heat. On the other hand, when water is changed from the liquid to the solid state, the 142 degrees of heat which it holds in the latent form is given out. I have here (said the lecturer) a tight tin box, and in this pan some lumps of quicklime. Now, if I pour some water on the lime, the water will enter into chemical combination with the lime, and will be solidified, giving out its 142 deg. of latent heat. I will put some ground coffee into this cold water, and set the dish into the box. I will also place some eggs and oysters in this pan, and place the pan in the box. Now (he added), if I pour some water upon the lime and close the lid of the box, I think we shall find that the water in solidifying will give out sufficient heat to cook the eggs and

oysters, and to "draw" the coffee. Though the lime absorbs the water, it exhibits no appearance of moisture. The water becomes as solid and as dry as the lime. (A great cloud of steam arose from the box, and at the close of the lecture the food was found to be cooked). Water, in changing from the liquid form to the gaseous, absorbs and renders latent not less than 1,000 deg. of heat. The law applies to all substances; in changing from the solid to the liquid form, or from the liquid to the gaseous, they absorb and conceal a quantity of heat, the quantities varying with the several substances.

CARBONIC ACID.—I have in this glass-beaker (containing the professor) some marble-dust. It is the carbonate of lime, composed of lime and carbonic acid. If I pour some sulphuric acid upon it, the stronger acid will seize upon the lime, and the carbonic acid will be set free in the form of an invisible gas. After the beaker is filled, as the gas continues to be generated, it will be forced over through this curved tube into this large glass vase. As the carbonic acid is as invisible as air, we will test its presence by lowering into the vase a lighted candle, which will be extinguished as soon as it enters the gas. The vase is about half full. As soon as the vase is filled, I will demonstrate that carbonic acid gas is heavier than air by pouring it down this trough. (A light wooden trough, some ten feet in length, with a hopper at the upper end, was inclined from the stage down towards the audience, and the assistants lighted a series of short candles, and fixed them along the bottom of the trough. The lecturer then placed the brim of the large vase over the hopper, and inclined the vessel so as to pour its contents into the hopper. As the invisible gas flowed downward along the trough, all of the candles were in succession extinguished. This striking experiment elicited universal applause).

THE CONDENSATION OF CARBONIC ACID.—At ordinary pressures carbonic acid retains the gaseous form; but under a pressure of 900 lbs. to the square inch, it is condensed to a liquid. In this strong wrought-iron vessel, I placed a quantity of carbonate of soda, and filled a copper tube within the vessel with sulphuric acid. Then after the vessel was very securely closed, it was inclined on its trunnions, so as to pour the sulphuric acid from the tube into the carbonate of soda. The carbonic acid from the soda was set free in such quantities as to raise the pressure to the point of condensation. The liquid was then discharged into another similar vessel, which I have here surrounded with ice. By repeating the process several times, I have collected about a gallon of liquid carbonic acid. I have a little in this small strong glass tube. You see that it is as pale as water, and more fluid. If the tube should be cracked, or even scratched, an explosion would follow, and the liquid would suddenly expand into gas. If we allow a portion of the liquid in this iron vessel to escape into the air, part of it will expand into gas, and in the act of expanding it will absorb so much latent heat as to freeze the rest of the liquid that escapes, and we shall have solid carbonic acid." [The assistants then opened the stop-cock a little, a sound like escaping steam was heard, and presently they brought forward a stout cotton bag which contained a pound or two of a white, snowy-looking substance, which was solid carbonic acid.]

FREEZING MERCURY.—If we place carbonic acid on some mercury, and dissolve it with ether, as it assumes the liquid state, it will absorb so much heat from the mercury as to freeze that liquid metal. (A couple of pounds of mercury were accordingly poured into a wooden mould, and covered with the solid carbonic acid, upon which was then poured some ether from a bottle. In two or three minutes the lecturer turned the mercury out of the mould in the form of a solid bar, which he threw upon the floor without breaking it. This solid mercury cannot be less than 40 deg. below zero and it is probably 60 or 70 deg. If applied to the wrist it will instantly raise a blister, as if the skin were touched with a red-hot iron. Any one who chooses may try the experiment."

FREEZING MERCURY IN A RED-HOT CUP.—The extremes of heat and cold were exhibited in a very striking manner, by means of solid carbonic acid. A platina cup (holding about a gill) was made red-hot. It was filled with some fragments of this solid carbonic acid, which were wet with ether. If I now, added the lecturer, introduce this thimbbleful of mercury into the middle of the mass, it will be frozen. A portion of the carbonic acid takes the spheroidal state, which prevents its contact with the heated platina, and thus the cup continues red-hot, while the mercury in its middle is freezing. (In about two minutes the thimble was withdrawn, and the solid lump of mercury was knocked out of it upon the table.)

THE MEXICAN DEBT.—A Paris correspondent states that the new Emperor of Mexico has decided to pay current interest on the 3 per cent. Mexican debt in

full, and the only question now is as to the arrears. The amount of the original debt was only ten millions. The emperor is still at Paris, and it is said all difficulties have been removed. He is to be his own commander-in-chief, but the French army will be replaced by a foreign legion. The archduke should make the Fenians an offer. Mexico would just suit them.

THE DANES AND ENGLISH SYMPATHY.—A correspondent writes thus from Copenhagen: "The accounts that have reached this city of the sympathy that has been manifested in England for the sick and wounded of the Danish army, and for the widows and orphans of the slain, have had the effect of increasing that affectionate regard for the English people which is known to be one of those national characteristics by which the Danes have long been conspicuously distinguished. The relief which will in this way be afforded to many sufferers will be most timely and beneficial; and the expressions of gratitude towards the kind contributors, and towards the journals that have so ably urged the claims of the suffering Danes on the attention of the English public, are sincere and universal."

THE LATE KING MAXIMILIAN.

KING MAXIMILIAN II. of Bavaria died of erysipelas, by which he was attacked only the day before.

Among the secondary sovereigns of Germany who aspired to direct the movement against Denmark, King Maximilian was chief. That cause, however, owes so little to personal instigation, royal or otherwise, that his death will not be much felt in Bavaria.

Maximilian was the son of Louis, the ex-King of Bavaria, and brother to Otho, the ex-King of Greece. He was born in 1811, and after being educated under the care of the illustrious Schelling, finished his studies at the University of Gottingen.

The prince took no active part in public affairs during his father's reign; but in March, 1848, the scandal caused by the King's connection with the courtesan Lola Montes made an abdication necessary and Maximilian was suddenly called to the throne.

The first year of his reign was marked by a number of liberal measures, such as it was the fashion with German rulers to adopt at that period. He granted general amnesty for political offences, and gave the royal assent to a law declaring the responsibility of ministers. He also abolished *corvees* and fiefs, and proclaimed the liberty of the press.

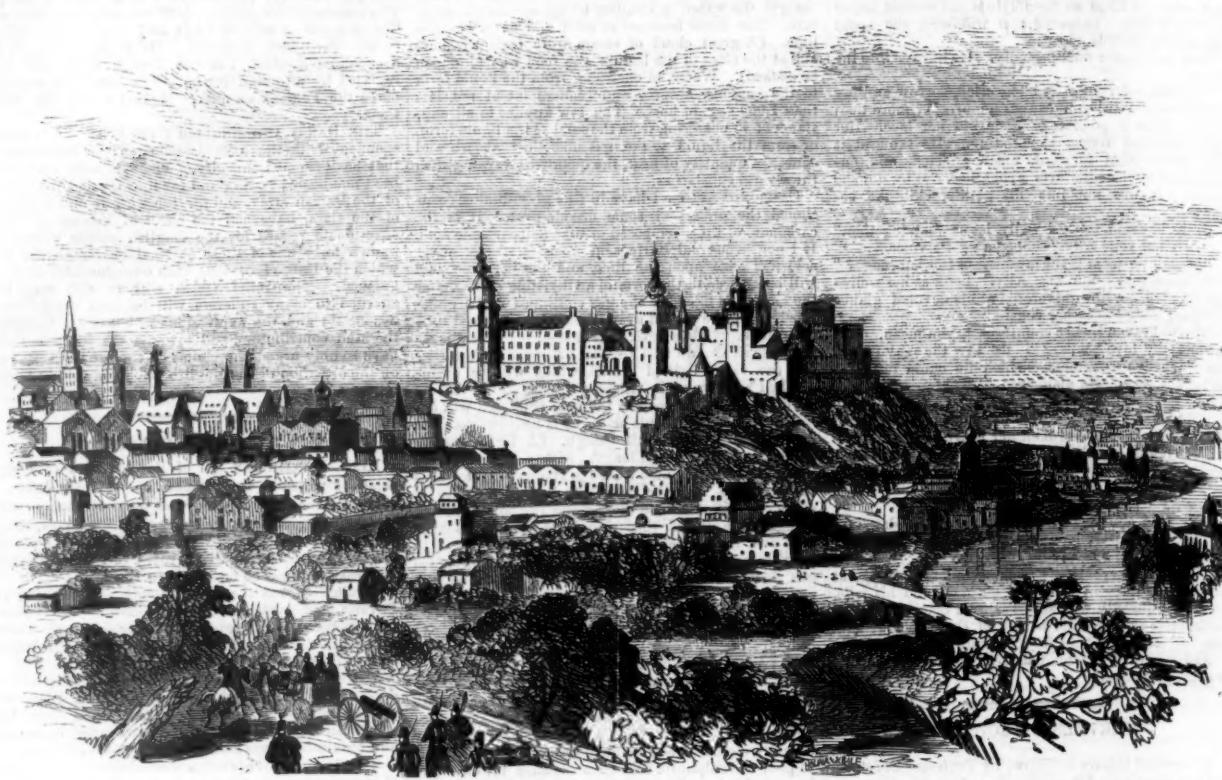
By 1849, however, things had taken a turn; and Maximilian was free to follow the bent of his character. He demanded the expulsion of a number of members from the Chambers, dissolved the Diet, and exiled several political writers without alleging any offence against them. In 1855, however, he became a little more liberal again. The last few years of his reign present no remarkable incident.

Maximilian was a man of considerable intellectual culture, and devoted himself as ardently to philosophy as his father did to arts. It was said a few years ago that he was writing a refutation of the system of Hegel. The new King, Louis II., was born in August, 1845, and is thus in the nineteenth year of his age.

THE STATE OF SIEGE IN GALICIA AND CRACOW.

An Austrian army hundreds of miles away, upon the shores of the Baltic, supporting insurrection on the ground of "nationality," and the Austrian Government at home launching manifestoes in hot haste against an uprising of one of the many "nationalities" which it holds in bondage, affords perhaps the very strangest of the political paradoxes of the present day. The troops of the Kaiser have wrested Schleswig and Holstein from Denmark, and overrun even Jutland; but Nemesis has not been slow to follow the outrageous act, and the Emperor has already found it necessary to declare Galicia and Cracow in a state of siege, the hydra of "national" insurrection, which he, with a blind fatuity, has been sedulously fostering in the North, having lifted another of its many formidable heads within his own dominions, as we lately prophesied it would surely do.

For many months it had been supposed by the Polish insurgents that France and even Austria were coming to their rescue. Some of the severest engagements took place near the Austrian frontier, the leaders of the insurrectionary bands crossed and recrossed it, and the minds of the Galicians were excited to the highest point. When it became plain that the great Powers would do nothing, and that the suppression by Russia of the rebellion was only a question of time, a change is said to have taken place in the parties and counsels of the Polish patriots. The White, or Aristocratic, party, which had managed to



[CRACOW, THE CAPITAL OF AUSTRIAN POLAND.]

take the lead and to carry on the resistance to Russia on the principle of the old Polish traditions, lost power, and was succeeded by the Reds, or Democrats, who repudiate the aid of emperors and kings, believing that peoples "who would be free, themselves must strike the blow." Their idea in Poland is said to be that the kingdom can be restored to its old limits, as they existed before the first partition, if only the whole nation could be brought to take part in the struggle; and, of course, the Galicians form part of this nation. These Democrats believe that insurrection on a small scale must be a failure; that the Russian Government has been so far successful because the movement was confined to the narrow limits of a province; and that the only way to revive the struggle with fresh energy is to extend it over the whole country properly called Poland. Their measures have been well taken. For a long time, probably ever since the rising this time last year in Poland, there has been a national organization in Galicia. At first, the secret Galician association was independent of Warsaw, and only gave help to the combatants by such means as were in its power, or afforded shelter to the refugees when pursued by the victorious Russians. Now, however, the sterner Democratic element has made for itself a stronger and closer organization. Galicia becomes but a province dependent on the "National Government" of Warsaw, and is administered, it is said, by a sort of Governor, supposed to be at Cracow. Very large preparations for war have been made, taxes are levied with unsparring severity and with strict impartiality, the unwilling being forced to contribute as well as the patriotic. In order that national money may be coined, gold and silver are collected, principally by women, and a secret army of policemen, or rather spies, enforces obedience to the commands of this unseen power. Revolutionary tribunals are said to be sitting, which condemn even to death the offender against the national code. Armed bands are ready to rise at the first signal; their leaders are appointed, their arms lie hidden; the national rising is fully organized; and thus Austria, who has sown the wind of insurrection in a foreign kingdom, is in a fair way to reap the whirlwind of rebellion within her own borders.

The proclamation of the Viceroy, Count Mensdorff, accompanying the promulgation of the Emperor's manifesto ordering a state of siege in Galicia and Cracow, contains the following regulations:

"The civil authorities are subordinated to the general in command. The military tribunals shall decide in all cases according to the military criminal

laws and method of trial, corresponding with the relative enactments of the civil criminal code. They shall exercise jurisdiction over cases of high treason, offences against the Crown or members of the Imperial House, riot, insurrection, murder, and open violence; over cases of assisting and harbouring; over several crimes and offences violating public order; and lastly, over breaches of the laws regulating the press. The general in command is empowered to issue orders for arrests up to the period of one year, but also to moderate and entirely remit punishments. He is authorised to prohibit the issue of periodical publications, to forbid the circulation of obnoxious prints throughout the country, to grant or refuse permission to allow new periodicals to appear. The laws for the protection of personal freedom and the rights of domicile are suspended."

Galicia, the administrative division of Austria now declared in a state of siege, takes its name from the town and district of Halicz or Galicz, which, with the greater part of Red Russia, belonged in early times to Hungary, but has been united since 1374 with Poland. It was on this ancient possession that Maria Theresa founded her claims, in the first partition of Poland, when she enforced the cession of this province to Austria, and united it under the name of the kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria with her empire. Galicia is bounded on the north side by the "kingdom" of Poland, on the east by the Russian provinces of Volhynia and Podolia, on the north-east by Moldavia, and on the south and south-west by the Carpathian chain, separating it from Hungary and Silesia. The country is in general hilly; and the climate is not favourable to longevity — consumption being common, and fevers and ague very prevalent. The population, which is probably about 5,000,000, consists chiefly of two branches of the great Slavonian tribe. Nearly the whole of Western Galicia is inhabited by Poles, who exist in a very rude state, even some of their nobility being scarcely superior to peasants. The higher nobility, however, being much more refined, and receiving a French or German education. They all wear the national dress — the *plica Polonica* — and in their manners and language are quite national, except a certain proportion of the people of Southern Galicia. Besides the Poles there are also Valaques or Wallachs, Jews, Gipsies and Armenians, Greeks and German settlers scattered over the kingdom.

Cracow, or Krakow, was in 1815, when the final fate of Poland was settled, made a republic by the allies, and so continued until extinguished as an independent state by Austria, and incorporated with Western Galicia, in 1846. It is bounded on the north by Poland proper.

on the east and south, by Austrian Galicia, and on the west by Prussia. Its superficial extent is only 480 English square miles, and consists of a plain running along the north bank of the Vistula, which river becomes navigable under the walls of the capital.

The city of Cracow, the capital of the quondam republic, is situated on the left bank of the Vistula, and is surrounded on three sides by hills, on one of which a monumental mound is erected to the memory of Kosciusko. The situation of the town, which is in the midst of a fertile valley, is very beautiful; and it is surrounded with promenades shaded with tall poplars. It consists of several distinct quarters, the chief of which are Cracow, Stradom, and Kazimierz, the last-named quarter being situated on an island in the Vistula, and inhabited by Jews.

The streets of Cracow are most of them broad and dark, and the houses have festooned gables like those of Augsburg or Nuremberg. On all sides peaked towers, gilded cornices, and statues meet the eye. There are no fewer than 38 churches, and many buildings that bear traces of ruined grandeur; the old palace of Sobieski has been cut down into shambles, and many large residences are gone to ruin.

shops, and many large residences are gone to ruin. The most striking of the ancient structures of Cracow is the cathedral, a beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture, and the finest in Poland. This superb edifice was destroyed by fire, but rebuilt in 1320. Here the Kings of Poland were crowned. It is rich in gold and silver ornaments; it has fifty altars, and more than twenty chapels, and contains the tombs of most of the Polish monarchs and famous men. In the centre of the city, upon the Wavel rock, looking down upon the distant plain, rises the old castle of the Kings of Poland, a spacious Gothic structure, first built, it is said, by Krakus, the founder of the Polish monarchy, in the year 700. A noble road, resembling that which leads to the castle of Edinburgh, leads up to it from the town; and from the summit of the Wavel rock there is a splendid view of the city, the Vistula, and the distant Carpathians. The thick walls and the old towers of the castle have an imposing appearance, pleading "haughtily for glorious goals," and the recollection of its former heroic occupants invests it with a character of sublimity. This grand old castle has seen six powerful dynasties pass beneath its portals—but—*sic transit gloria mundi*—it is now only an Austrian barrack. Cracow has a university, which was

not very long ago one of the richest in Europe, and possesses two museums—one of mineralogy, and the other of natural history. The whole city was devastated by a conflagration in 1850, when more than 80 houses were destroyed.



[SIR HUGH SHOWS ETHEL THE SLIDING PANEL.]

THE SECRET CHAMBER.

CHAPTER XVIII

"Ha!" he exclaimed, "a bird has been here, but has flown at our approach. Who has occupied this place lately, Sir Hugh? If you will not answer, probably your ward can, for here are footprints that I dare swear were made by her dainty feet."

Sir Hugh looked down and saw the small tracks made by Ethel in her late visit, distinctly defined upon the dusty covering of the floor, and he internally cursed the thoughtlessness that had suffered them to remain. He replied:

"My sister and Ethel desired to visit this portion of the house, and did so a few days ago; they entered this cell, but no other. If we had expected such a visitation as this, we might have taken the precaution to obliterate these marks. They prove nothing. Let us proceed with the search you wish to make."

"I shall proceed, and I shall find what I came to seek," said Kirke, significantly.

They next entered the chapel, and carefully examined every portion of it. Sir Hugh then led the way to a large hall, which had served the monks as a refectory-room. The abbot's apartments opened from this; but all was in such a state of dilapidation as showed how long and completely they had been deserted.

At the end of an hour every nook had been explored, and the leader gruffly said:

"Our quarry is in none of these; but there are vaults beneath. All these old religious houses have a perfect honeycomb of cells beneath their foundations. Show us the way to them, if you please, Sir Hugh."

They were then in the refectory-room, and the baron pointed to a heavily-barred door.

"Through that you will gain access to the vaults."

On opening it, a flight of stone steps appeared, which Kirke narrowly scanned by the light of the torches he ordered to be brought. He saw no evidences of their having lately been used, nor had it escaped him that the cobwebs were unbroken over the bars his men removed.

He began to fear that Vernor would evade him, for a large reward was offered for his arrest, as it was believed that he had papers of importance to the Government in his possession. Kirke swore at his men, and rated Sir Hugh in the rudest manner; and although he saw that he was ready to sink from

fatigue, he forced him to go on as the pioneer of the party. Every corridor was passed through, every door opened, and a thorough search made for the fugitive.

Sir Hugh's heart beat painfully, and the blood rushed to his brain in a seething torrent, as they passed in front of the wall in which the concealed door was situated, but he breathed freer when they left it behind them without a suspicion of its existence. Kirke said:

"Diable! it seems that there is no one here. Now lead us to the subterranean outlet, if you please, for I am aware that such a one exists."

Sir Hugh gladly obeyed, for he had managed to avoid the staircase leading into the chapel, and the whole party followed him through the winding way to the broken entrance which opened upon the park. On issuing from it, he saw that sentinels were placed at intervals around the whole place. He drily said:

"In this instance, colonel, you have found that my word was to be taken; come with me to my room, and let us settle how much my bond is worth."

Kirke nodded intelligently, and gave his orders to his men to return to the lawn in front of the house, while he conferred with its master. Disappointed and chagrined at their want of success, the soldiers sullenly obeyed, and Sir Hugh led the way to that side on which his own apartment was situated, followed by Kirke.

When they gained it, he rang and ordered ale to be taken to the troopers, and then threw himself upon a seat to regain his breath after the severe exercise he had taken.

"Well, sir," said Kirke, "what have you to say to me in private? Your son has evaded me in a strange manner, for I am not often at fault in the information given me. He spent last night in this house, of that I am certain; and if I had not permitted my men to stop at the village, I should have trapped him. I shall do it yet, be sure of that."

"If you find him, take him; that is all I have to say on that score. And now as it regards this arrest for myself and my family; can we not evade it in some way? Are you certain that a warrant is really out for us, or only for my son?"

He fixed his keen gaze on Kirke, who laughed aloud.

"Ho! by the mass, you are a shrewd fellow, Sir Hugh. No warrant has been issued for you, but I have authority delegated to me to take charge of all suspicious persons. I consider you as a very suspicious character, and therefore take upon myself to arrest you

in the name of his Majesty. Remember, sir, that with my troopers at my back, my power is not to be disputed."

"It is not my purpose to do so; but I would make it your interest to be as lenient as possible in its exercise. The utmost that can be done to me is to levy a fine upon my estate. I am old and infirm; it would go hard with me to be imprisoned, therefore I offer you a hundred pounds to leave me in peace, and to use your influence to prevent us from being further molested."

"Us! am I to understand that all your family is to be included in this amnesty?"

"No, not all; for my son can care for his own safety. Only the ladies of my household and myself. It will be absurd to punish a child like Ethel for what she did the other day. She is romantic and enthusiastic, and her feelings carried her away. She and my son acted against my judgment; and, to do Mrs. Methurn justice, she, too, opposed the appearance of Ethel in the procession at Taunton, but the wilfulness of the young people overruled us."

Kirke listened attentively, and, after a pause, said:

"Well, I'm sadly out at elbows just now, and if you will make the sum two hundred I will agree to leave you in your own house with a guard of two men to answer for your appearance at the assizes, for every prominent man engaged in this affair must undergo some sort of a trial. Your offence and that of your sister was comparatively light, and a sop to Cerberus in the shape of a few hundred pounds will set all right; but your ward will suffer more heavily. That bible will cost her a round sum, even if she escapes with that penalty."

"Ethel has money, and she can pay a reasonable ransom; but two hundred pounds is a large sum for me to give. I will pay you the one hundred I offered in gold."

Kirke laughed sardonically.

"I know your affairs pretty well, Sir Hugh, and I know that of late years you have managed to increase your rent-roll till it now amounts to a pretty respectable sum. You are bargaining for your very life, for you can never live a week in the wretched prison in Taunton. An infectious fever already rages in it, and you will probably be detained a month or two before your trial will come on. Balance your life against your money, and make your decision. You go with me, or pay the two hundred pounds."

Sir Hugh looked at the inflexible face of the speaker, and with a heavy sigh, replied:

"Since it must be so, I will give you even that, sooner than go to prison."

He went to a desk, and from a private drawer produced a rouleau of gold.

"I had hoarded this for a different purpose, but I suppose it is as well employed to purchase indemnity for the present as in any other way."

The eyes of Kirke sparkled at the sight of the gold, and he weighed the parcel in his hand a moment before speaking.

"You're a tramp, Sir Hugh, in spite of the hard things that are said of you. In this matter I can trust to your word, for you would not dare to deceive me. I will count over the money when I get back to my own den."

"You will find all right; and now how long do you suppose it will be before we shall be summoned to appear in court?"

"It may be a month, or it may be longer. Jeffrey is on his way to Taunton, and he will make expeditious work with the rebels. The king is resolved to make the people afraid of another outbreak, and, God! I think he chose well for that purpose when he sent me and my lamb to harry them, and Jeffrey to sit in judgment on them. But time passes. Sir Hugh, and I must go on the track of that son of yours. He has papers that the Government is anxious to secure, and I do not mind telling so liberal a person as you are, that he may save his own neck by giving them up."

"As to the papers, I shouldn't care if they were in your hands now; but I hope Vernor will get safely out of the country. If he does, he will come to terms with the government, and surrender the documents for a consideration."

Kirke burst into a brutal laugh, and struck the old man smartly on the shoulder, saying:

"Like father, like son. Master Vernor has sold himself once for his wife's fortune, and now he will sell his master for the thirty pieces of silver. The young Judas!"

Sir Hugh flushed, but he thought it best to make no reply to the truth so bluntly spoken, as he arose with his unwelcome guest, and accompanied him to the hall.

At a sign from Kirke the troopers rushed in a disorderly manner to their horses, and the stern voice of their commander issued his orders. He beckoned a man toward him and said:

"Jones, you and Simpson will remain on guard here, and see that not one of the household leaves the premises. Await further orders from me, and keep a keen look-out for the person we came to seek: send me a daily report of all that happens."

The man touched his hat with a slight show of respect as he replied:

"I understand, colonel. The ale here is pretty good, and I shan't quarrel with my quarters as long as it flows freely."

"See that you do not drink too much of it, sirrah. You know me, and you comprehend that the neglect of your duty will be severely punished."

The trooper nodded and curtly replied:

"Tim Jones and Tom Simpson know their duty as well as any lamb in your regiment, colonel. We can take a gallon of the strongest tap, and be as fresh as if we had swallowed so much water."

Kirke smiled grimly, and turned to his horse, which a trooper was holding in front of the door. Springing into the saddle, he waved his hand to Sir Hugh and said:

"Good morning: present my compliments to your pretty wench, and tell her that if I can I will give her a chance to get a better husband. Ho, ho!" and his coarse laugh was lost in the clatter of hoofs, as the troop swept away in the direction of the dell once occupied by the gipsy's encampment.

Sir Hugh glared after them and muttered:

"So—you intend to search the woodland for your prey; but you'll not find him there, thank heaven!"

He turned away and went toward his own room, closely followed by Jones. The servants were still huddled in a frightened group at the lower end of the hall, and the trooper paused and spoke to them.

"Look here, you men and women; this house is under military law, and I'm the provost-marshall. If one o' you does one thing that I don't permit, I'll be after you with a bayonet. You're to furnish me and my comrade with the best victuals and drink, and you're not to go outside o' the place without a permit from me. Do you understand?"

Faint murmurs came from the alarmed menials, but not one had courage to reply intelligibly.

Jones then followed Sir Hugh into his room.

With an oath the old man turned on him and said:

"Why do you come in here, fellow? Go to the kitchen, and let them give you the best the house affords; I wish to be alone."

"I am sorry to circumvent your wishes, Sir Hugh; but it's my business not to lose sight o' you. You

heard yourself what Kirke said, and he'd shoot me if I was to let you get away from this ore rum old den."

He sat down as he spoke, and composedly crossed his legs.

Sir Hugh was in a fever of anxiety to join Vernor, for he feared that when all was still, with his natural recklessness, he would venture forth and make his presence known by knocking on the door which communicated with the corridor.

After a few moments of perturbed thought, he said:

"I wish to visit my sister. Since your comrade watches before her door, you can order ale to be brought to you in the hall, while I go up to her room."

"Well, old fellow, that ain't unreasonable, and I must say that you understand the duties o' hospitality. I'll accept your offer, but by your leave, I'll set by this ere door, and have it left open; 'cause the bird that lately perched in that cell beyond, may come back an' try to git through on this side."

The man was evidently as shrewd as a police detective, and with a strong effort the irascible baronet controlled the expression of his ire. Jones was soon established to his satisfaction just without the door, with a huge tankard of ale, with bread and cold meat, before him.

Sir Hugh then slowly ascended the staircase, at the head of which he found Simpson slowly pacing to and fro in front of Mrs. Methurn's room. He touched his hat as the baronet approached him, and offering him a piece of money, the latter said:

"You can join your comrade below a few moments, where I have had refreshments placed for you. There is no way to escape from this floor, except by the way of the staircase, and we have no idea of attempting to leave the house."

The soldier surveyed him carefully. The purple flush had died out of his face; it looked wild and haggard, and he moved as if all the vital force had left his body. He said roughly:

"Well, I believe I may trust you, for you are in no fix to tramp any where yourself, an' if there are ladies that dodge, they'll be nabbed by some o' the men outside, for my colonel aint a goin' to leave this wile of beauty till he traps the fox what earthed here last night. I'll go down to the crater comforts."

CHAPTER XIX.

SIR HUGH found Mrs. Methurn and Ethel clasped in each other's arms, and he sank into a chair completely unnerved by all he had gone through in the last eighteen hours.

"Their search was vain," said Mrs. Methurn, "and Vernor has escaped them, but must we go with them? Is that dreadful man inexorable?"

"He is gone," replied Sir Hugh. "At a heavy price, I bought from him the privilege to be held a prisoner in my own house. Heaven help me! I had saved that money to enable Vernor to escape, if things should go wrong with him in this venture; but nearly all had to go into the hands of this cormorant."

"Are they all gone?" asked Ethel, quickly. "Then we can seek poor Vernor, and bring him among us again."

"No, child; two are left as spies upon us, and I believe that the whole troop will form a cordon around the place, as long as they think there is a chance to take my poor boy. I am dreadfully shaken, and if they should catch him, I believe it would kill me outright."

Ethel approached him, and tenderly taking his shaking hand in hers, stroked it gently.

"But they will not find him, Sir Hugh. Vernor is strong and shrewd, and he will outwit them yet. Be of good cheer! Since his place of concealment was not detected, he is safe, if we can manage to convey food to him. He can stay in hiding till the excitement is over."

"Aye—but how are we to communicate with him? Two men are left as spies upon us, and they are keeping watch upon my room. I am in dread lest Vernor should come up, and apply for admittance. Yet I was forced to come here a few moments to speak with Agnes. What shall we do? My brain is not clear, and I cannot decide what course is best to pursue."

"Is there no other avenue by which we can enter the vaults, except that through your room?" asked Mrs. Methurn. "I have heard that there is a door behind the tapestry in the dressing-room that was once Lady Methurn's. You must know if it is so."

Sir Hugh changed colour and shuddered, for he recalled the hour in which a death-like form had been borne through the door, and from that day it had been closed up by his own hands. He faintly said:

"There was an outlet, but—but—I had hoped never to be forced to enter that room again."

Mrs. Methurn was surprised at his emotion, for she did not give him credit for such tender affection for his departed wife as to withhold him from visiting her apartments. She asked:

"Did you not go in there with the men who searched the house?"

"No: they only required my presence with them as guide in the older portions of the building. The door of which you speak is concealed behind the tapestry, and has also a heavy wardrobe placed in front of it. Otherwise, the soldier must have discovered it."

"Then we can gain access to Vernor. There is a door in Ethel's room which communicates with Lady Methurn's apartments. Come with us to assist in moving the piece of furniture of which you spoke; we must lose no time, for the sentinel may return to see if we are safe in here."

With much effort the old man arose, and led the way toward the rooms which had been so long disused. On that side of the house there was a suite of apartments, three of which were occupied by Mrs. Methurn and Ethel; the others had been appropriated to the deceased lady of the mansion, and had never been used since her death.

Mrs. Methurn carried the key with her, and in a few moments they stood in the deserted chamber. The heavy old-fashioned furniture stood exactly as when Lady Methurn had occupied it; the walls were covered with richly wrought tapestry, and the windows and bed had heavy brocade curtains falling over them.

The door opening into the dressing-room was unlosed, and with a heavy heart and unwilling feet, Sir Hugh entered it. The wardrobe of which he had spoken, was an immense armoire brought from France, and the carved cornice reached nearly to the ceiling. With great effort they succeeded in removing it from the wall sufficiently to permit them to pass behind it.

"The door opens into the garret above the old house," said Sir Hugh, "and through them we can reach the chapel."

A few vigorous pushes sent the door open with a crash, but the way beyond was dark, for it lay under the eaves of the older portion of the Priory. Ethel flew back to her own room to get a tinder-box and candles; but before returning with them, she passed into Mrs. Methurn's apartment and slightly unclosing the door, listened for the sound of the troopers' voices below.

They seemed to be enjoying themselves greatly, for their jovial chat was mingled with snatches of song, and she sped back with the assurance that for the present all was safe.

The candle was soon lighted, and the three passed through the immense garret, the roof of which was supported by a double row of rafters. It was barely high enough for a tall man to pass through the centre, and the sloping roof came nearly to the floor on either side.

At the furthest extremity was a flight of decaying stairs, which Sir Hugh looked on with apprehension. He said:

"I am afraid they will never bear my weight, but I must descend them. At the foot is a sliding panel concealed behind one of the pillars that supports the roof of the chapel. I am terribly spent by the unusual exertions of the day, but my boy's safety is at stake, and I must risk everything to ensure that."

"Cannot I go down?" asked Ethel, "I am light, and the steps will not be likely to give way beneath me. Tell me how to open the panel, sir, and I think I shall be able to do it."

"No, child, I must risk it myself, for you could not find the way to Vernor's hiding-place. Light the other candle, Agnes; and after you see me safe to the bottom, you and Ethel return to your room. Keep the men at bay for half-an-hour, for I cannot be back in less time."

"Let me follow you to the lower step, and learn how to manage the spring," pleaded the young girl; "it may yet be necessary for me to use it."

"You are right, child; but I did not believe you had so much forethought. Bring the light and follow me carefully."

Mrs. Methurn stood above, holding her candle over the dark aperture, and Ethel stepped lightly after the heavy form of the baronet, carrying hers.

Sir Hugh placed his feet on each step with extreme caution, holding to a rough bar of wood that ran along one side. They creaked fearfully beneath his weight, but after a few moments of breathless suspense he stood safely at the bottom, Ethel hovering just above him, like a spirit of light and beauty.

After a few trials the panel slid back, and he stepped into the chapel. With a sigh of relief, he took the candle from her hand, and said:

"Return to your room, now; I shall reach Vernor in safety."

Ethel obeyed him, and Sir Hugh proceeded to the flat stone which opened into the vaults.

At the foot of the steps he was compelled to sit down and take breath, and the deadly pallor that overspread his wrinkled face, showed that he was suffering both physically and mentally. This fearful interruption to the even tenor of his life had given a shock to his system, from which he felt he would never recover.

After a few moments, he aroused himself and moved with great effort towards the avenue into which the secret chamber was situated.

More than once he fancied he saw a figure flitting before him, but on passing his hand over his eyes to steady his vision, he knew that it was only a fantasy produced by the state of excitement into which the events of the day had thrown him.

He reached the wall, touched the spring, and as the door opened, Verner stood before him, with an expression of fear and anguish on his white face that made him start back with terror.

"Why do you look thus?" he faltered. "Your face is enough to scare one."

"Is it?" said the young man, fiercely. "Then it only mirrors what is passing within me. I dropped my lantern in coming in, and the light was extinguished. I have been shut up in this dark hole three hours, unable to find the spring that opens the door, or I should have ventured out as soon as those cursed troopers left the vaults. I stood in here, and heard their bloodthirsty cries, but I was safe. Ha! ha! they will never track me to my asylum, that is one comfort."

"Then why should you have been so much alarmed? You knew that I would come to you as soon as it was safe to do so."

"Aye; but they might have arrested you and taken you away. Then I should have died here, trapped like a fox; have died in darkness—of famine! Oh, I believe that I am twenty years older than when I came into this infernal den; besides, I have had a strange vision, Sir Hugh, which unnerved me, as you see."

"A vision!" faltered the old man; "nonsense, Verner. Why should a man of sense yield to such fantasy? I thought you had more courage."

"I know it was folly; but if you had been shut up in a dark cell without the power to find the way out, I believe you would have suffered as intensely as I did. I passed my hands many times over the frame of the door, but I could find no means of freeing myself from this dreadful place. I exhausted myself with efforts to do so; and afraid to leave the opening, lest I should never be able to find it again, I sat down, and leaned my head against the wall. A numbing stupor seemed to fall on me, which I could not shake off. I am not conscious that I slept, though I could not have been completely awake. I closed my eyes to shut out the darkness that encompassed me; and in a few moments a circle of light seemed to flicker in them, in which was distinctly mirrored the staircase that leads to the room above, and I saw descending it a tall woman clothed in white. She came towards me, and, waving her hand above my head, wailed forth:

"'Not now—not now is the hour of your doom, but in years to come. Beware of this room! It is fatal to me and mine—fatal to me and mine!'

"As the last words were slowly repeated she stooped, as if she meant to kiss me, and I saw her face. Sir Hugh, it was not that of the stranger you said lay in the stone sarcophagus above—it was the face of my dead mother, and I knew it by the portrait that hangs in the gallery! I cannot stay here. I will not go up to that chamber. I would rather risk being taken by Kirke and his myrmidons."

Sir Hugh was superstitious, as most people were in his day, and he listened with dread to his son's words; but he spoke, cheerfully:

"Nonsense, Verner! You were overcome with fatigue, and you slumbered lightly. In the strait you are in, you naturally thought of your lost mother, and the fantasies of dreamland are unaccountable to wiser people than you or me. Two soldiers are left to watch the house, and you will expose yourself to extreme danger by leaving your place of refuge. I came hither at great risk to myself to warn you not to attempt to enter my room, for a strict guard is kept upon it."

"How, then, did you manage to evade them?"

"I came through the garrets by a way unknown to you; but you are safer here than you can be elsewhere. I will leave you a light, and Ethel will place food in the chapel for you. You can safely venture that far to obtain it, as I do not think the troopers will invade the vaults again."

"I will brave such danger as there may be," said Verner, recklessly. "The face of an enemy is familiar to me; but to stay shut up here with yonder dead woman I will not. I can return with you, sir, and take up my abode in the garrets you mentioned. It will be easier for you to communicate with me there."

Sir Hugh would have combated this determination, but Verner refused to listen to him. A strange

dread of the vaults seized him, which he would make no effort to overcome, and together they at length went out, and closed the door behind them. Verner held the light close to the wall, and laughed as he said:

"No wonder the troopers missed it. I, who know where to find the entrance, would never dream of its existence from looking at this blank wall. Let us get away, sir, for you begin to look very ghastly; you have been forced to over-fatigue yourself by that brutal Kirke, and I shouldn't wonder if you had another dreadful attack of the gout. Lean on me till we get out of this dismal place."

The old man was glad to avail himself of the strong arm of his son, for he felt scarcely able to sustain himself, and they went slowly towards the stairs. They passed safely through the chapel, and Sir Hugh showed Verner how to fasten the panel.

With great effort the baronet ascended the narrow, moulder stairs, and Verner sprang after him. Ethel stood at the top watching for Sir Hugh's return, and she offered a surprised greeting to Verner.

(To be continued.)

COQUETTISH.

HER life's a shadow picture,
It knows both joy and grief;
But though her joys are fleeting,
Her sorrows are but brief.

No grave, perplexing wonder
Nor child of genius she;
She sips the sweets of life,
And feels it joy to be.

Some grasp the ear of fortune,
And strive to guide the boat;
She leans upon the rudder,
And seems content to float.

She'll love you in the morning,
But if you tease or scold,
She'll vow that she detests you
Ere yet the day grows old.

She's winning and she's teasing,
Just as the case may be;
There's not another like her—
She sorely puzzles me.

M. H.

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jesuit," "The Prelate," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

O all-preparing Providence divine,
In thy large book what secrets are enroll'd?
What sundry helps doth thy great power assign,
To prep the cause which thou intend'st to hold?

Drayton.

WHEN the little party, bound on their errand of benevolence, drew up in front of the old tower, they found not only the doors but the lower windows of the building so securely barred, that they resisted every effort they could make to force an entrance. This was a terrible disappointment. To return to the village for assistance they well knew would be useless—for the inhabitants held the place in such superstitious dread, that not one of them would venture to approach it after nightfall. Even the intrepid Bell began to feel a vague terror creep over her, when she recollects the different tales which she had heard from childhood connected with it.

"We will not be balked!" exclaimed Frank Hazleton, who had entered heart and soul into the adventure—to which, independent of the feelings of humanity, he was urged by the hope of rescuing the mother of Margaret, and recalling himself to her daughter's mind. "Let us try the opposite side of the mansion—it is the oldest part of it."

All three proceeded in the direction he had pointed out.

The north side of Bordercleugh was completely covered with ivy: it was the growth of ages, and in many places the stems of the over-verdant parasite were sufficiently thick, and so imbedded in the interstices of the wall, to admit of the weight of a man. The farmer, who was equally active and strong, resolved by its assistance to climb to one of the upper windows, and if he succeeded in obtaining an entrance, to descend, open the shutters of the lower room, and admit his companions. It was an enterprise of no small danger—for not only was the height considerable, but the spot selected was directly over the brow of the precipice on which the edifice had been built: so that if his foot slipped, or the ivy yielded with his weight, the generous-hearted fellow ran the risk of being dashed to pieces as the reward of his humane attempt.

Fortunately the night was too dark for Bell to perceive her brother's danger.

"Do not let my sister stir from your side!" he whispered in the ear of Charles Briancourt; "and, above all, keep close to the building!"

Had his visitor known the reasons for his request, never would he have permitted him to risk his life in desperate an enterprise.

The only indication of Frank's progress was by the rustling of the leaves and the whizzing flight of the numerous birds which had made their nest in the ivy and the holes of the old wall. Slowly he dragged himself up the perilous ascent, only pausing to take breath when he had discovered some secure footing or hold for his strong grasp.

To his two companions the few minutes which followed his attempt seemed an age.

While in this state of suspense, the storm, which long had threatened, broke over the mansion. The thunder-peals were terrific, preceded, as usual, by the flashes of broad sheet-lightning, which for an instant illuminated the sky for a considerable distance around.

At the first of these, Bell veiled her eyes with her hands. It was fortunate that she did so—for Charles perceived by its momentary light not only the abyss upon whose brink the tower was situated, but the position of the young farmer, now more than half-way up, clinging with desperate tenacity to his fragile stay.

In one respect the lightning was a fortunate circumstance. It enabled Frank to ascertain the exact position of the window, and direct his course accordingly.

"Has he succeeded?" whispered the anxious Bell.

Charles could scarcely answer "Not yet!" so anxious did he feel for the safety of her brother.

"Would we had waited till the morning!" said the trembling girl; "should anything happen to—"

Before she could complete the sentence, there was a noise of a heavy body falling, and the sound of the cracking of the shrubs, as it dashed down the precipice.

Neither of the watchers could speak. Poor Charles felt the cold perspiration standing upon his brow. He scarcely ventured to draw his breath, so overcome was he with horror.

"Only a stone!" exclaimed a cheerful voice above them; "all right, Bell! I have reached the window!"

The crash of broken glass which followed the assurance relieved the watchers from the deepest agony their young hearts had ever yet endured.

"Keep to the wall," continued Frank, who had succeeded in obtaining an entrance, "and go round to the other side. I will soon find means to admit you."

Supporting his companion with one arm, Charles followed his direction, and soon reached the spot where they had left the chaise. They had not long to wait. The forcing back of a rusty bolt was heard, and the shutters of the lower room were thrown open by the farmer.

His sister sprang into the apartment, and, throwing her arm around the neck of her brother, mingled reproaches and kisses, as she blamed herself for the danger he ran.

"Danger!" repeated the gallant fellow; "pooh! I have often run a much greater risk to rob a poor bird of its eggs. There, let me help our friend in—for the rain is falling fast—and procure a light."

Before commencing the search, Frank insisted upon placing the pony and chaise under shelter. He fore saw the probability of being obliged to pass the night at Bordercleugh, and was anxious that the patient animal should not suffer.

Returning by the window, he carefully closed the shutter, and, lighting the lamps they had brought with them, all three started upon their errand of mercy.

Upon entering the sleeping-room of Ned Cantor, the first thing that struck them was the state of the bed. Everything but the mattress had been removed.

"It is evident," said Charles, "that she is not here!"

"We will find her yet!" replied Frank, in a hopeful tone; "it is a queer old place. Bordercleugh is not to be searched in an hour. I've heard my grandfather say that, during the troubles in '15, Derwentwater lay concealed here three days, and Cumberland's dragoons quartered in the house all the time."

Thus encouraged, they recommenced their search with renewed hope.

For four-and-twenty hours Mabel had endured the hideous solitude of her cell. True, she was no longer in darkness, but the pale rays of her lamp only served to make the horrors of the cold, damp vault the more apparent.

Several times she had tried to shake the fastening of the iron-barred door, which stood like some jealous warden between herself and liberty. Its sullen echoes seemed to mock her efforts.

"Hopeless—hopeless!" she murmured; "the work of villainy will be accomplished, and the child of my dear mistress will think that I have wilfully broken

the promise I made her! I shall die here!" she added; "die alone—no kindred hand will close my eyes! Ned will return, and find only the bones of his victim."

At times the horrid thought that he would not return presented itself; and death in its most fearful form—starvation—stared her in the face.

At such times she would eagerly count the loaves her gaoler had left, and ask how long it would be possible to prolong existence by eking out the scanty supply.

"God!" she exclaimed, yielding to her despair, "why are thy thunders still? Hast Thou no arm to burst this living tomb—this den of crime and blood? I have served Thee!" she added; "trusted to thy mercy! Do not desert me in my misery—let me behold and bless my child—right the orphan cruel men would wrong—then take thy careworn servant to thy rest!"

The loud peal of thunder which startled Charles and Bell was heard by the poor captive.

"He bears me!" she continued, in yet greater excitement; "his red right arm is bared! Forgive my murmuring—my impious prayer—teach these trembling lips to breathe the words they lisped in childhood! Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done!"

Sinking on her knees, she prayed long and fervently. As the words of resignation escaped her, the balm of hope infused itself into her soul. She felt that even were she buried beneath the ruins of her prison tower, the hand she trusted could preserve her.

It is astonishing how quickly the ears of those condemned to solitude catch the slightest sound. Mabel, seated upon the floor of her prison, was in the act of breaking a portion of one of the loaves which Ned had left her: suddenly she raised her head—her heart beat violently.

"It will break!" she murmured, placing her hand upon her bosom, to control its throbings. "Should hope deceive me now!"

Starting from her position, she rushed eagerly towards the door, and placed her ear upon the ground. All again was silent. Still she continued to listen, scarcely daring to breathe.

"Deceived!" she sobbed; "deceived again! Hark! there is a step—a human step—on the long, vaulted passage! Ned's, perhaps? No matter whose—even his presence would be welcome now!"

Starting to her feet, she beat wildly against the door, and uttered piercing cries. Frank and his companions, who were on the point of giving up their search as hopeless, followed in the direction of the voice. The captive heard a hand upon the bolt of the prison-door, and fell senseless with joy upon the earth.

When restored to recollection she found herself in the upper part of the building, on her daughter's bed, and Bell—the warm-hearted Bell—crying and watching over her.

"Is it a dream?" she murmured, stretching out her hand and touching her, so that she might convince herself it was a being of flesh and blood—a loving, sympathising creature like herself—and not the vision of her excited imagination.

"It is no dream!" sobbed the pitying girl; "you are safe—quite safe—and shall quit the place the instant you can bear to be removed. Frank and a kind, good gentleman, whom Lady Sinclair sent in search of you, are below, to protect you, if necessary, from any further violence.

"Bless them!" sobbed the liberated prisoner; "bless them. Wealth has not changed the heart of Margaret to her poor mother! I am strong!" she added, making a feeble attempt to rise—"quite strong! Where is she? I asked but to live to bless her—to see her once again—and heaven has heard my prayer! I can die tranquilly now! Had I perished in that fearful place, I fear I could not have forgiven my—those who have persecuted me—and it is a sad thing to quit the world with resentment in the heart!"

Bell noticed with admiration how carefully the sufferer abstained from naming her husband. Woman-like, true to the noble impulse of her sex, although love for her tyrant was extinct in her crushed heart, the recollection that she once had loved him sealed her lips in silence: she might not forget, but never would accuse him.

It was not till a late hour the following morning that Frank Hazleton and Charles entered her chamber. Although still exceedingly weak, they found her calm and collected. A brief conversation with the former made known to her how necessary her presence was in London.

"When does it take place?" she faintly inquired.

"On the eighteenth!"

"And this is?"

"The fourteenth," answered Frank.

Mabel counted on her fingers, "One—two—three—four—four days! Then there is no time to lose! I will be there!"

"Impossible!" exclaimed Charles Briancourt; "it would be cruel—unmanly—for me, in your exhausted state, to dream of such a step! Perish Broadlands!" he added; "it is not the estate I am anxious for; it was the feelings of my wife I would have spared—the fame of—"

"My dear mistress! the noble, kind, the murdered Clara, to whom I swore an oath! It must be kept!

If you have any pity in your heart," she continued, in a state of violent excitement, "take me to London! I shall die mad—mad—if you detain me here! We were children together! She forgot I was her servant—treated me as a friend—tried to instruct my uncultivated mind—confided in me! It is a debt of gratitude which life itself would but too cheaply pay!"

Charles looked at Frank, as if to ask his advice. He dared not trust his own heart to decide. The young farmer shook his head despondingly.

"Four days!" he said; "the time is too brief: to arrive in time, they must start immediately."

As these considerations passed in his mind, he felt that the risk would be too great.

"She will die upon the way!" he whispered.

"Then carry me into the court upon my bier!" said Mabel, firmly, for her quick sense of hearing had caught his words; "and let my corpse bear witness of my fidelity."

Bell possessed a decision of character rarely met with in one so young and inexperienced in the world. She saw that excitement and disappointment were far more likely to prove fatal to the speaker, in her present exhausted state, than the fatigues of a journey to London.

"When must you start?" she asked, addressing Charles Briancourt, "in order to reach London on the day of trial?"

The husband of Mary looked at his watch, and assured her that at the latest it would be necessary to leave Borderclough in six or seven hours.

It was so much time for rest.

"Have you a carriage?" she next inquired.

"Yes—my father's."

"Let it be here, then, at the time you name," said Bell; "when the mind is fixed on the rack of expectation, the body suffers with it. Relieve the first, and nature will often rally, even when driven to its last citadel."

"She is right," exclaimed Frank; "and we will accompany you."

Charles gave a reluctant assent. He felt that the responsibility of removing Mabel, at such a time, would rest upon himself.

"Should she expire on the road," he asked, "how would he meet the tears and reproaches of Lady Sinclair?"

Mabel was the only person who appeared to entertain no doubt of the result. Even Bell, who had given the decision, trembled at her own temerity: but it was too late to retract.

"Thanks, thanks," murmured the sufferer; "you have saved me."

Gradually the fearful excitement, which had threatened such serious consequences, calmed down, and the speaker fell into a sleep so profound, that when the hour of departure arrived, the young farmer and Charles carried her in their arms to the carriage, in which the forethought of the former had caused a bed to be placed.

Bell took her seat beside her.

At the first motion of the vehicle Mabel opened her eyes, and gazed for an instant with an uncertain air around her. At last she recognized her companion, and a faint smile played over her wasted features.

"London," she murmured, "my child. Bless you—bless you."

In a few minutes she again fell into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER LXXV.

He is composed and framed of treachery.

Shakespeare.

NED CANTOR's first visit on his arrival in London was to the chambers of his old acquaintance, Mr. Quirk, who was nervously anxious for his appearance, seeing that the next day was the one fixed for the trial. The old lawyer shook his confederate warmly by the hand, and led him to the inner office, where Phineas and Serjeant Pompus were in deep consultation.

In reply to the numerous questions which the gentleman of the long robe put to him, the convict either gave evasive replies, or maintained a dogged silence. The man of law could not comprehend his reserve.

Quirk, however, perfectly understood it. He knew that before Ned committed himself by any express declaration, it was necessary that certain preliminary arrangements should be gone into; and he sighed when he thought of the probable amount.

"Our friend," he said, with an abortive effort to smile, "is worn with a journey. We must give him

a short time to recover his fatigue. Perhaps Serjeant Pompus will spare time for a second consultation in the evening, at my private residence?"

As the second consultation implied a second fee, the learned gentleman made no objection: probably he understood the cause of the witness's hesitation. After promising to attend, he gathered up his papers, and took his leave.

"Phineas, said his grandfather, "see Gibon, and hear his opinion on the point I submitted to him last night."

The young man took the hint, and, following the example of the counsel, quitted the office; but not before he had warmly pressed the hand of the old convict.

"Now, Ned, we are alone," observed the lawyer, carefully closing the door after his grandson, "tell me, have you succeeded?"

"In what?" demanded his visitor.

"In obtaining from Mabel any proof of the marriage."

"If you mean any certificate," answered Ned, "no!"

The lawyer gave a sigh of intense satisfaction.

"She has baffled me there!" continued the speaker. "I was on the point of succeeding, but accident crossed me."

"When did this occur?" demanded Quirk, his countenance again assuming a serious expression.

"Shortly after I left London the last time, on my way home."

"At Moretown Abbey?"

"Yes," faltered Ned, in a tone of surprise; "but how the deuce came you to know that?"

"My dear friend," replied the man of law, "there are few pieces of knowledge that I wish to arrive at which I do not contrive, by some means or other, to obtain. You were right in one respect. The old desk did contain a most valuable and important document, which I would willingly give a large sum—a very large one—to get into my hands. But it was not the one you sought."

The convict looked at him for some moments in silent admiration of his genius.

"You must have dealt with the fiend!" he exclaimed.

Quirk modestly denied having any personal acquaintance with the mysterious personage alluded to.

"Or Dr. Briard?" added Ned.

"I have not seen or heard from him for months!" was the reply.

"Well!" said the visitor, scratching his ear—for he was fairly puzzled—"perhaps you can tell me what became of the papers?"

"They are in your possession!"

"You are out for once!" exclaimed Ned, in a tone of bitterness which vouches for his sincerity.

"Well, well! We will let that matter rest for the present!" observed the lawyer. "All I can say is, that if you have, or can obtain that document, I will pay you as large—nay, a larger sum than any other person, for the possession of it. Now to our own affairs," he added.

"Yours, you mean."

"Well, well—we will not quarrel about words. What says Mabel?"

"Obstinate as a mule!" replied her husband. "I am convinced she knows something, although I cannot wring it from her. I have heard her declare, over and over again, that George Stanley and Clara Briancourt were lawfully married; but when I ask her whom or where, she whitewashes and remains silent."

"She must be kept out of the way!" observed Quirk, decisively.

Ned nodded, as much as to intimate that there was little danger of his wife's appearing in the witness-box; and his confederate in so many pieces of rascality did not choose to push his inquiry any further.

"The more I reflect," he continued, "the more I am convinced that the union never took place."

His visitor opened his eyes very wide. He could not comprehend the motive of the speaker in attempting, as he considered, to humbug him.

"No! The haughty Clara Briancourt was his mistress—not a wife!"

"Pooch," exclaimed the convict; "You know better."

"I, Ned—?"

"You!" continued Ned Cantor. "Have you forgotten the letters which, by your direction, I intercepted, in which he always spoke of her as his wife? It appears that, with all our money," he added, "we did not get possession of them all."

Quirk began to feel very uneasy.

"Four of them are in my possession."

"Yours, you rascally villain!" exclaimed the lawyer, jumping from his chair. "I mean," he added, suddenly correcting himself, "how very unhandsome to withhold such documents—after the sums of money I paid you, too!"

"I didn't withhold them!" replied Ned, in a sullen tone; "they reached their destination, and it was only

at a great expense and a vast deal of manœuvring that I lately got possession of them. However," he added, rising, "since you treat an old friend in this unhand-some manner, when he comes so far and has run such risks to serve you, I'm off!"

"My dear Ned, you know my hasty temper."

"What have I to do with your temper?" demanded the ruffian, angrily; "do I owe you anything?"

"Only a little consideration, on account of our long friendship!" meekly answered the lawyer.

"Look you, Quirk," said Ned Cantor, somewhat appraised by the submission of his old acquaintance; "friendship is all very well. I have my *feelin's*."

"Of course you have, my dear fellow!" ejaculated Quirk.

"But I can't afford to lose by them!" continued his visitor.

"It is not fit you should. Perhaps you will permit me to see the letters you speak of?"

"No!"

"How can I judge of their value, else?"

The convict rose from his chair, and fastened the door of communication between the two offices, then deliberately took his station between the fire and the table at which the lawyer was seated. The old man observed his precautions with a bitter smile—probably they were unnecessary: but Ned Cantor was too experienced a tactician to give a chance away.

Deliberately opening his pocket-book, he drew forth a single letter, and threw it upon the table.

"Read that," he said; "and when you have read it and returned it, I will let you see another! Attempt to detain, tear, or destroy it," he added, "and I'll wring your neck with as little hesitation as I would that of moorhen!"

One by one he permitted the lawyer to peruse the four letters.

"You see," observed the convict, as he received back the last one, "that I have not deceived you. Two of them bear the London post-mark, and two the Liverpool! They must have been written just before he sailed!"

Although the letters of the betrayed George Stanley afforded no direct proof of the marriage having taken place, they were strongly corroborative of the fact, and, in the hands of an eloquent advocate like Sir Frederick Silvertop, might exercise a powerful influence upon the jury.

"And how much do you expect for them?" inquired Quirk.

"Four hundred!" was the reply.

The old man wrote a cheque for the amount, and placed it in the hands of Ned—who, from the facility with which the sum was obtained, began to suspect that he had underrated their importance.

"If we succeed, you shall have a thousand!" said the lawyer; "and remember that much will depend upon your evidence!"

Ned perfectly understood the indirect bribe thus offered to perjure himself. But what did he care?—gold was his religion, and revenge upon the fine friends of his daughter Margaret the only passion of his selfish heart.

"We understand each other?"

"Perfectly!"

"And you will meet Serjeant Pompus this evening?"

"At any hour you choose to appoint!" replied the convict, shaking him warmly by the hand; "anything to serve an old friend!"

So saying, he unbarred the door, and immediately left the office.

Ned could not resist the strong desire he felt to visit several of his old haunts. Sauntering down Fleet Street, he crossed Blackfriars Bridge, intending to make his way into one of the low purloins of those desperate men who live in daily violation of the law.

As he passed down Tooley Street, a fellow in the garb of a sailor held out his hand to implore charity.

"Nothing for you!" muttered the convict.

As he hurried away, the fellow gave a peculiar whistle.

Many a time when poaching in the woods of Lexden, he had heard and answered the same signal. His eyes and those of the beggar met, and to his mortification, he recognised his old pal, Black Will. He had not seen him since they had worked together in the same gang at Sydeney: both, as our readers will recollect, having been transported for the attempted robbery at the goldsmith's.

"Markham's—the Mint!"

"All right;" replied the pretended seaman, in a low tone; "I'll follow!"

Markham was the name of a fellow who kept a receiving and lodging-house in the locality whispered by Ned. He was an old man, who, by a long and successful career of villainy, had amassed considerable wealth. He had trained many to the scaffold and the goal. His name was as well known to the penal settlements as in the court-yard of Newgate; and

many a wretch, toiling in Norfolk Island, or waiting the hour of trial in his prison cell, had reason to curse the hour he first became acquainted with this cunning tempter,

He had two houses: the one in which he lived himself, and where only the most respectable—that is to say successful—clients were received; the other was chiefly frequented by dishonest apprentice lads, juvenile pickpockets, and petty-larceny rogues, who in time might aspire to the grand *entrée*; at present he regarded them as *in statu pupillari*.

To well-known, successful hands, who were for the moment out of luck, Markham would give credit, and even advance small sums of money, at a usurious rate of interest. In his dealings with the juvenile thieves he was compelled to use great caution. It was a rare thing for him to purchase anything of them himself. Such transactions were generally entrusted to a man named Simon, who ostensibly was a lodger in the house.

The aged corruptor of youth had one virtue—fidelity to his associates and victims. No matter how tempting the reward, he had never been known to betray one of them into the hands of justice. Hence their confidence in the *gaw'or*—as they generally styled him—was unbounded.

Being perfectly acquainted with the locality, Ned passed without the least hesitation through the shop to an inner room, where Markham was debating with a tall, rakish-looking man, on the price he should pay for a valuable diamond, which he had just removed from its setting.

"It really is not worth any more," his visitor heard him say; "the jewels have been so well described. I must send it to Holland to—"

"Don't let us interrupt business," said Ned, coolly seating himself.

The receiver, who had been too much occupied to notice his entrance, looked up, and the hand which held the gem shook as if it had suddenly been stricken with the palsy.

His companion started to his feet, and hastily thrust his hand into his pocket, as if in search of a weapon.

"All right," continued the speaker; "ain't it *gaw'or*?"

At the same time he drew his thumb in a straight line from his forehead to his chin.

"Well—yes; I suppose it is," answered the respectable Mr. Markham, not quite reassured, even by the familiar sign which the intruder had given him. "Dear me," he added, "I ought to recollect you!"

"I should think so!"

"Ah I remember—Black Will's pal—sent over the water for the Lombard Street affair. Dear me, that I should forget! But you were only on my list for a short time."

"Quite long enough," thought the returned convict.

The warm shake of the hands which followed dissipated any remaining doubt which the tall, rakish-looking gentleman might possibly have entertained—and he resumed his seat.

Ned, however, saw no more of the diamond.

"And when did you get back?" inquired Markham, in a tone of affectionate interest; "I thought it had been for life?"

"So it was."

"Escaped?"

"No pardoned! But don't let me disturb you!" added his visitor. "I met an old pal just now—Black Will. Poor devil, he seems down upon his luck."

"Begging, I suppose?" observed the young man, perfectly convinced of the real character of the speaker, who nodded in the affirmative.

The receiver and the party he had been engaged in doing business with laughed heartily at the simplicity of Ned.

"Ah, well!" said the former, restraining his mirth; "it's a new dodge—they are at least a century behind us in Sydeney."

Before the returned convict had time to ask for an explanation, Black Will entered the shop, passed into the inner office, and, selecting a key from a number which hung over the chimney-piece, beckoned his former friend to follow him.

"Wait an instant," said the pretended mendicant, after having ushered him into a comfortable, though rather gloomy-looking room; "I'll soon be with you."

Ned seated himself in an easy chair, anxious to witness the dénouement of Will's singular conduct. Everything around him indicated that the occupant of the chamber was well to do in the world. A handsome gold watch and several rings were lying on the chimney-piece—a costly meerschaum and embroidered cigar-case cast carelessly upon the table. But what puzzled the visitor most was an open pianoforte, and several handsomely-bound books on a music-stand.

"If it had been a hand-organ," thought the convict, "I shouldn't have been quite so much surprised; but a *piany*—he can never carry that a-begging with him!"

His old acquaintance soon reappeared in a dressing-gown and slippers: his sailor's rags—like the costume of an actor who had played his part—had been cast aside, and there was a certain air of refinement in his manner, as he shook his former companion cordially by the hand.

"Begging," said Ned, "seems to be a very comfortable trade!"

"Pretty well!" answered the owner of the apartment with an air of indifference; "at any rate, it is less dangerous than robbing!"

"And pray how did you contrive to get away?" demanded his friend.

"Turned pious," said Black Will; "took to praying with my fellow-convicts—suggested rules for their amelioration! The chaplain—a very weak man—swallowed it all—felt an interest in me: so one fine morning I received a pardon, as the reward of my exemplary conduct; You see," he added, with a cynical smile, "that even in this world virtue is its own reward!"

"Ay," observed his visitor, with a grin; "and, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it is the only reward it ever receives! But you don't mean to tell me," he added, pointing to furniture and various articles in the room, "that all this is done by begging?"

Its occupant assured him that it was.

"Then all I can say is, that the world is far more charitable than I gave it credit for!" was the rejoinder, delivered in a tone and look which showed that the speaker was far from being convinced.

Anxious to change the subject of conversation, Will produced an excellent bottle of claret, and equally good cigars. The two friends chatted over old times and adventures, but it was evident that the confidence which once existed between them was at an end. The pretended mendicant never once inquired of his former confederate how the world had treated him, or what he was doing; perhaps he felt convinced that he would not hear the truth.

When Ned Cantor rose at last to depart, Will shook him with the same apparent cordiality by the hand, but expressed no desire to see him again. With an attention which his visitor thought overstrained at the time, he insisted upon accompanying him to the door of the shop, where their adieux were resumed. As soon as he had passed the window, he called a boy, about thirteen years of age, who was serving behind the counter, and pointed to the receding figure of the convict.

"You see that person?" he said.

The lad nodded.

"Bring me word where he lives, and you shall have a sovereign!"

"A suv'r'in!" cried the urchin, who was perfectly up to his trade; "I'd follow him to Newgate for half the money."

"Can't make it out," muttered Ned, as he turned down Tooley Street on his return from the Mint. "Begging! Humbug! What did old Markham mean by calling it a new dodge? There ain't nothing new in that—but I'll find it out, cunning as Will thinks himself."

He did find it out—but at a moment and in a manner which he least expected.

(To be continued.)

THE DANISH CLERGY.—The Danish clergy are to be classed among the "underpaid." They eke out their miserable stipends by farming. Some of them, indeed, are very considerable farmers, and their labours are seen rather on the face of the ground than in the Christian deportment of their flocks. The great proof of wealth is the possession of a large number of cows, and very often the Dane in orders has more quadrupeds than bipeds under his care. They are described, however, as a mild-mannered, well-educated set of men, fond of simple domestic comforts, generally married to very exemplary wives, equally free from pretension, and cheerful and hospitable. Their eggs, butter, milk, and poultry, are cordially offered to the stranger. The Jutland clergy are better paid than the island priests. From £120 English, with a house (worth fully half as much more than the same sum in this country) to £360, is the range of the value of the benefices. They have often great difficulty in getting their tithes, which depend, in Aalborg and elsewhere, on the price of corn. It is remarkable that no young man of high family ever thinks of choosing the Church as a profession in Denmark. Besides the church, each village is provided with a school-house, partly sustained by the Government, partly by local contributions, together with a gymnasium for the use of the boys of the neighbourhood. It is at the ancient cathedral church of Ribe that they tell the story of Bishop Peter, who was elevated to the episcopate on this wise:—The canons of the cathedral on a certain occasion did not come to an agreement in their choice of a prelate, and in despair addressed themselves to a poor but notably pious monk, Peter of Raa Ager, begging him to indicate to them an honest man, and offer-

ing to swear that they would accept his choice. Peter consented to nominate the bishop, and said very sensibly, "Since ye, my very good masters, will have me, poor simple man that I am, to appoint your bishop, Peter of Raa Ager shall be the man. I have always heard that he who bears the cross, crosses first himself." The canons held to their pledge, and Peter proved a very worthy overseer.

THE KEY TO THE DANISH INVASION.

In the third instalment of the correspondence on the affairs of Slesvig and Holstein, presented to Parliament, occurs the following passage in Lord Wodehouse's report of his interview with M. Bismarck.

Lord Wodehouse, referring to the German demand for the abrogation of the new Danish Constitution, stated the contingent difficulty in the way of immediate compliance, which would of course suggest itself at once to the mind of every constitutional statesman. "It might be necessary," he reminded M. Bismarck, "if the question was not concluded by the existing Rigsraad, which expired at the end of the year, to call together the new Rigsraad, by which alone the law could then be altered."

The reply of the Prussian Prime Minister was as follows: "His Excellency said, provided Slesvig was exempted from the operation of the law by some act done by the King before January 1, when the new Constitution came into force, he did not care by what assembly the law was ultimately abrogated. However, it would, he was convinced, be necessary for the King of Denmark to dismiss his present ministers; a *soup d'etat* would be the best solution of the difficulty. The fact was that Germany would never be on good terms with Denmark as long as the present democratic institutions of Denmark were maintained."

The *Independent Belge* says, in referring to the above conversation:

"The truth is, this is the principal obstacle to the re-establishment of peace. The Danish people since 1848 has possessed institutions perfectly adapted to its temperament and its degree of civilization. It appreciates all the advantages of them, and it is in order to defend them better that it has been successively impelled to strengthen, perhaps more than was necessary, its centralizing action over the German element of the Duchies, even to consent to separate itself from Holstein, where resistance to this Danification was most ardent.

"All the efforts made since 1852 by successive Governments, at Copenhagen, to bestow upon the two parts of the monarchy a common Constitution which should satisfy the exigencies of the two nationalities, especially with regard to political liberties, have constantly failed, against the double opposition they encounter, in the Duchies on the one hand and at Copenhagen on the other. Just now the opposition of the Duchies extends throughout all Germany, and the feudal party at Berlin have taken it up with all the more eagerness because they see a means thus of reacting against the institutions which hamper them at home.

"As to the German Liberal party, which is so excited against the assimilating tendencies of the Danes, it is playing, in this sanguinary affair, the part of Bertrand in the fable, and it will learn, to its cost, that liberty is not to be struggled against with impunity, even when it is defended by a little nation justly proud of its institutions and its independence."

A PARALLEL TO THE DISASTER AT SANTIAGO.—In 1212, London Bridge was the scene of a catastrophe almost as terrible as that which has recently occurred in Chili; for on a summer night of July in that year a great fire on the Southwark side took place, and multitudes crowded on the bridge to assist or look on. Suddenly the wind caused the fire to communicate also to the north side, and the people, set between two raging furnaces, attempted escape by dropping into the boats and barges that came to their rescue; but, as is usual in such cases of disorderly terror, they sank the boats by their crowding numbers, so that what between drowning and burning, above three thousand persons perished at once.

THE MILK COWS AND MILKMAIDS OF HOLLAND.—The most really picturesque attraction of the scene is the herds of cattle. These are of a native breed peculiar to the country, and from the quantity and quality of their milk, as well as from the laudable propensity of the beef to accumulate on those parts, are worth a handsome price per pound, are greatly valued by the people. They are generally of a coal-black hue, but spotted and streaked with white in the most curious manner. The pride which the Hollanders take in their cattle is well deserved, and is very conspicuous in the care they take of them. The cows are kept in stables, often as neat as most of our own kitchens. The majority of the poorer classes in our own country are not accommodated with such

good quarters. When they are taken to pasture their feet are covered with leather shoes, lest the dampness of the soil should cause disease of that part; they are always carefully curried, and brushed, and washed, while in summer they are covered with cotton cloths, that they may not suffer from the attacks of the little winged zousaves. In winter they are protected from the cold by blankets. On their way to the fields they are attended by milkmaids of the rudest complexions, who take good care that their tempers are not ruffled, and show the most affectionate regard for their welfare. The Hollanders have not suffered the race of milkmaids to die out as we have, and one can hardly avoid instituting a melancholy comparison between the present times and the old, in this respect, in our own country. How great the difference between those who, in the days of our ancestors, used to carry about the richest of milk in neat little tubs on their heads, and after their day's labours were over did nothing but dance with their sweethearts in concentric circles around flower-crowned maypoles, and that grouty fellow who slinks round to one's back door in the morning before light, as if he were ashamed of himself, and leaves a wine quart of water and chalk, after first carefully shaking it in order to mix it.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

WILLIAM and Arthur Manning were sons of a humble mechanic, who, when he had given them a good practical education, together with a thorough knowledge of the trade by means of which he had thus far gained for himself and family a respectable livelihood, had endowed them to the extent of his ability.

As soon as the youngest reached the age to which fifteen so eagerly looks forward—the age of twenty-one—the two brothers left their country home, and repaired to a neighbouring city, in the hope, and with the expectation, of their being able to pursue their occupation to greater advantage.

Fortunately, they found business lively—the times, just then, happening not to be, as times occasionally are, harder than the pavements. And though, it was somewhat discouraging to find wages so much lower than report had said, the young men set to work with a determination.

It is wonderful how much more a man will save, many times, when depending on these savings for the accomplishment of some desired end.

Now, both William and Arthur had in view a very special and desirable object, to effect which only a certain amount of money was wanting.

This object was marriage. Each had, previous to quitting home, obtained the consent of a pretty girl to become his wife; and only delayed claiming them until the wherewithal to make a comfortable start in life should be acquired.

Young men from the country, though they may not be addicted to vicious habits, generally find laying up money a difficult matter. There is so much to entice them away from sober duties, that they are rarely able, when Saturday night comes round, to reckon six days' labour for the closing week. A nine-pence goes for one, a shilling for another, needless thinking. And he who, at the end of the year, finds himself no poorer than at the beginning, has probably done better than many he might name.

But the Mannings, having their native industry and frugality constantly stimulated by the wish to provide themselves with homes of their own, kept close to business, and took care of the pence.

If ever they felt for a moment inclined to accept the invitation of some flaming handbill, and go to see this or that great actor or actress, William had only to think of Eva, and Arthur of Sophia, in order to content to allow the occasion to pass. For what satisfaction would it be to them, seeing that it would be at the expense of a day's postponement of their marriage? None at all, thought they.

Among their acquaintances were a number of young men like themselves.

Some of these, though they did not intend to trespass largely against the right, were, in regard to conduct, not over-scrupulous. Their evenings were usually spent at a billiard-saloon. But then they protested that they themselves were mere spectators. It was pleasant, they said, after being confined all day, to go somewhere and hear people talk over the news, and so long as others would play and they could not hinder it, there could be no harm in looking on, just for amusement.

With such specious reasoning did these triflers with evil, attempt to justify themselves, and induce the brothers to join them—but the last was always in vain. The love that William and Alfred bore their affianced brides was alone potent to keep them in the path of rectitude. Self-respect would have been lost, had they, in view of one day becoming

the husbands of those whose characters they held in so high estimation, knowingly have rendered themselves less worthy of their affection and confidence.

So, instead of frequenting places where the purity of their morals would have been endangered, the young Mannings employed their leisure hours in reading instructive books, with which their excellent landlady was always happy to furnish them.

The young ladies might almost have been proud to know how powerful an influence for good they exerted over the lovers from whom they were separated, and through them, over others; for example is not without its influence.

When they had been a year in town, William and Arthur made a short visit to their home and their sweethearts; after which, they again devoted themselves to labour.

When they returned, lo, they were accompanied by two married ladies.

These were none other than Eva and Sophia. The former was the wife of William, the latter of Arthur.

The young men now established themselves in different parts of the city, and each commenced business on his own account.

Their capital, as will be conceived, was small; but they stoutly resolved to prosper, and this was a great deal in favour of success.

Their residences were pleasantly situated, and prettily furnished; and the occupants were as happy as they could well be.

All day long, the husbands congratulated themselves upon their good fortune, and never met without repeating how delightful it was to have a home of one's own to repair to at night, instead of a comfortless lodging-house. Never did two young men exchange a state of bachelorship for the state matrimonial with more hearty goodwill.

William and Arthur belonged to a class of individuals, who though they can keep secrets, dislike the idea of having too many to keep.

In other words, they were frank and communicative. Up to the time of their marriage, knowledge of their every-day concerns, and all their plans for the future, whether large or minute, were entrusted to each other. But now that they were for the most part separated, it followed, naturally enough, that the wife should be chosen to fill the place of the brother.

To William, it was inexpressible satisfaction to relate at night the events of the day; and this he did as regularly as he took his place at their quiet table.

Had fortune been favourable, his happiness was ten-fold greater when Eva had smiled her gratification. Had fortune frowned, Eva's sympathy soothed him into forgetfulness; her cheerfulness inspired him with fresh ardour.

Eva always manifested an interest in whatever interested her husband, and shortly, without being aware of the fact, became familiar with his affairs of business.

What had been begun for pastime, was continued for profit. A suggestion from her was frequently acted upon by her husband with especial advantage.

But another and greater benefit accrued to William from keeping his wife apprised of his circumstances. She was thus enabled to regulate in accordance personal and household expenses with degree of nicety, which, otherwise, with the best intentions in the world, she must have failed to do.

Had he met with a loss, or was business dull, she would always contrive to retrench somewhere, and would suffer her wardrobe to grow scanty, rather than detract from her husband's limited means.

And though, at such times, William seldom knew the particular sacrifice she made, he felt sensible that she was a prudent, self-denying woman, to whose watchfulness, no less than to his own untiring industry, was to be attributed his prosperity.

"If woman has less strength than man," he used to say, "she has more ingenuity." He found Eva a helpmate, indeed.

Arthur, like his brother, without having in view any particular end, spoke to his wife from time to time on matters relating to his business. But she, unlike Eva, was unwilling to hear. At first, she made no open objection, but sought by silence and manifest indifference to show him that such conversation afforded her no gratification. And when these failed to restrain him, she would interrupt him with:

"Pray, Arthur dear, don't bring your shop home with you, I've no use for it."

This hint was always given in so sweet a tone, and accompanied by so sweet a smile, that no one could have received it ill—Arthur of all others.

In his estimation, Sophia could scarcely err; in this instance, as usual, her desires, to be complied with, had only to be comprehended. It cost him an effort, but the habit of "bringing his shop home," was very soon entirely broken off.

The consequence was, Sophia understood her hus-

hand's pecuniary situation about as well as she did that of the man in the moon, and felt concerning it about as much solicitude. With abilities nowise inferior to Eva's, she was far from being as good a wife. Naturally fond of dress and fashionable amusements, she daily incurred expenses which her husband's income would not justify. These expenses, though separately they appeared trifling, in the aggregate were large—larger even than Arthur was aware until the end of a year, when, his accounts being settled, he discovered, to his surprise and chagrin, that he had not a pound more at command, than he had a twelvemonth previous.

"I supposed I had saved a thousand, at least," he said to himself, as he saw debt and credit balancing each other; "or rather I ought to have saved that amount," he added, remembering how, of late, a suspicion of the reality had sometimes crossed his mind. "I am sure we have had nothing which we could have done without—that is, nothing of consequence;" and slowly pushing aside his book, he leaned his head on his hand with an air of despondency.

For a full quarter of an hour, he sat thus, musing. Where was the reward of his late and early toil? where the incentive to future enterprise? What had become of the proceeds of his business, seemed a mystery. For the absence of some hundreds of pounds, he could not for his life account.

At length his thoughts reverted to his brother. He wondered what was just then his precise standing; he would give something for the privilege of comparing books.

Perhaps he had been more successful than himself, perhaps less. Finally, he started up with a determination of walking over to William's place, and offer, or receive congratulation, as the case might be.

The effects of a fine bracing air were visible upon him ere his walk was ended; the accustomed light returned to his eye, the accustomed flush to his cheek. He began to think that his anticipations had been raised unreasonably high, and that there was in reality no cause for discouragement.

Having made a beginning, he reasoned, his profits would increase, as a matter of course; and hereafter the same degree of exertion would be productive of more satisfactory results.

On entering his brother's shop, he found him at his desk, upon which lay two or three open books. He had evidently been engaged in the same manner as himself.

"How are you?" exclaimed William, turning with a beaming countenance towards his brother as he approached. "Glad to see you; have a seat?" and he drew forward a chair.

Arthur shook his extended hand, and seated himself in silence. It was easy to see that William had something to show for his twelvemonth's labour, which he had not. His face spoke him elated with success beyond his expectations. His own heart sank again.

"Well, brother, how much have you made this year?" inquired William; "for I suppose you know by this time how you stand with the world."

"Made a living," replied Arthur, in a tone of forced unconcern.

"Come, now, be brotherly," urged the first, smiling. "Here are my books; you are at liberty to examine them as much as you please. Our old master, who has just been in, tells me I have done remarkably well for the first year; I sincerely hope you have done still better."

The other pretended to cast his eyes over the books for a moment, but in truth neither saw, nor wished to see, a single figure. He felt that his brother had outstripped him, and the knowledge, while it could not awaken in his breast one sensation of envy, was humiliating and self-condemning in the extreme.

"You are going to enlarge, without doubt?" remarked William, as his brother turned away without comment.

"Not at present," returned the latter, carelessly, determined on concealment.

"Perhaps I am too fast," said his brother, thoughtfully; "I have made arrangements to double my business at once. I cannot see why, with twice the original capital, I may not safely do that."

"He has doubled his capital, while mine has not increased a tittle," thought Arthur; but he made no reply, and, after a few commonplaces, left, and returned home.

"I am glad you have come," said his wife, meeting him at the door with one of her bright smiles. "I feared we should be late."

"Late? where—what?"

"At the theatre, of course."

"The theatre? I cannot go there to-night."

"Not go to-night!" exclaimed Sophia, in a tone of disappointment. "Tis Madame Trivoli's benefit, you know. The tickets are purchased; you promised me."

"I did, love," said her husband, recollecting himself. "I had forgotten; we will go."

"Not if you have any particular reasons for remaining at home. You are pale: are you not well?"

"Perfectly. A little weary, that is all. The play will refresh me."

An hour after they were in their box—the one enjoying, the other endeavouring to enjoy the brilliancy of the stage.

As months passed, Arthur's circumstances, instead of improving, became more and more embarrassed.

He was exceedingly perplexed, and this perplexity wore upon his spirits, crushing innate enterprise at a time when its vigour was most indispensable. His shop was late opened and early closed. He often stood by his work abstracted and motionless.

His whole mien was changed. Even his gait was not the same as formerly. The prompt step with which he was accustomed to pass over the space between his home and his place of business, had become a don't-care-if-I-never-get-there pace.

Wherever and whenever a friend was found to converse with, he would linger, as if he had never heard that time is money.

Others observed and remarked upon it, contrasting him with his brother and his former self. A poor man without energy is a poor man without credit, and he who has neither money nor credit is destitute indeed.

Arthur's loss of energy occasioned his loss of credit, and, in turn, the loss of his credit brought his energies to a still lower ebb.

Meanwhile, no suspicion of the truth had crossed the mind of his wife. He saw her happy, and could not endure to mar that happiness by a look or word. He tried to think it unnecessary to alarm her, and to hope that matters would soon take a more favourable turn, and all would eventually be well.

He could not blind himself to the fact that his income was diminishing, and his expenditure increasing, but, on the subject of the cause, his ideas were rather indistinct. Gradually he inclined towards the doctrine that some men, do what they may, will be poor, while others, in spite of themselves, will be rich.

Unfortunately for her own and her husband's interests, Sophia had contracted an intimacy with the wife of a rich broker named Vane. The lady had little to recommend her apart from the wealth of which she was as proud as those who have risen from indigence to affluence usually are.

Her fondness for the society of Mrs. Manning consisted alone in the pleasure to be derived from that lady's rapturous praises of everything above her own reach. Sophia's almost envious admiration of the products of her riches, was delectable food to the purse-pride Mrs. Vane.

But while she would almost as willingly have resigned her own wealth, as have seen the other gratified in her inordinate ambition to equal herself in the style of living, the fear lest this friendship for her more humble neighbour might prove a slippery rock beneath her feet, to bring her down from her never more than precarious standing among the aristocracy, led her to be constantly urging upon Mrs. Manning the necessity of having more regard for appearances.

Sophie weakly yielded to her guidance; Arthur as weakly, and more culpably, because more understandingly, yielded to his wife's persuasions; and one by one, pieces of furniture, of the kind intended for show rather than use, found their way into the tradesman's house.

In point of dress, too, Mrs. Manning's ideas became more and more extravagant. A frequenter of fashionable resorts, she began to feel that nothing short of the magnificence which there dazzled her eyes, would satisfy her desires.

She had fancied that a trifling conformity to the dictates of fashion would complete her happiness; but, after having gone far beyond her first designs, desire was greater, and content further off, than at the beginning. So ardently did she sigh for riches, as sometimes almost to overlook her many blessings. Her striving to appear what she was not, daily lessened the probability of her ever becoming what she strove to appear.

Arthur Manning at last saw clearly that they were living beyond their means, and that immediate reform could alone save him from ruin. But, without the co-operation of his wife, what could he do towards effecting such a reform?

He finally came to the resolution, painful as it was, of laying before her his situation, and appealing to her better judgment to second his efforts to turn the tide that was setting so strongly against him.

But the first allusion to this subject was met by a playful reminder that he was not to bring his shop home.

"It is as much for your good, Arthur, as for my own comfort," said his wife, "that when you come to your fireside, the cares of business should be left behind."

Arthur knew her kindly meaning, and hesitated;

yet he felt that he had hesitated too long already. His heart was too full for utterance.

"Come," she exclaimed, as he was nervously himself to speak, "never look sad; but I know the way to cheer you up!" and opening the piano, she struck up a lively air.

Hardly had she commenced, however, when Mrs. Vane dropped in.

"Dear Mrs. Vane, I am so happy to see you," cried her friend, rising from the music-stool. "Arthur is insufferably dull this evening." Then, advancing and leading her towards him, she added, with affected seriousness, "I sincerely hope your skill may enable you to give him malady a name."

"Blues, decidedly!" said the visitor scanning his features. "I see too much of that disorder at home to be able to recognize it at a glance," and she gave way to a laugh which rather overstepped the bounds of refinement.

Arthur rallied and assumed cheerfulness. But the gay chit-chat of the ladies seemed mockery to his feelings, and pleading indisposition, he soon retired to his chamber.

The next morning, as he sat at breakfast with his wife, and when both had been for some moments silent, the latter asked abruptly:

"How much longer shall we be obliged to live crowded into this small tenement?"

The husband looked up in surprise. "I do not understand you," he said, at length.

"The question is plain," returned Sophia. "I wish to know whether you will not purchase a larger house; this occupying a small one, and that not our own, is excessively disagreeable to me."

"Now is my time to speak out. I will deal plainly," thought the husband; and he began, "My dear, you do not consider our circumstances —"

"There, Arthur," interrupted his wife, starting up with a merry laugh, "that will do. Just that Mrs. Vane predicted. That is always the way with husbands, she says, when wives propose the smallest outlay."

Mrs. Vane! The very name of the woman who had indirectly robbed him, was abhorrent to Arthur. He had long been aware of the unbounded influence she held over Sophia, but never until now fully realized how entirely for evil had been the influence.

"Appearances are everything, Mrs. Vane says," continued Sophia. "Once give people to believe that we are rich, and we shall be rich, as a matter of course. Such is her conviction, and surely she ought to know. Her husband has a house for sale which she assures me is just the thing for us. But I will say no more about it now, if you are going to look so serious. You will think better of the matter before night."

So saying, she quitted the room, without giving her husband time to reply.

He waited awhile, but as she did not return, he rose with a sigh, took his hat and went out. On reaching his shop, a bill of one hundred pounds was presented for payment. What was to be done? He had not a sovereign at command.

"Could you grant a few hours' time?" he asked humbly of the creditor, who stood awaiting his action in the premises.

"Yes," was the rather reluctant answer of the man. "I might be willing to wait till six to-night, provided I could be sure of it then."

"I give you my word that you shall receive full payment at that hour," said Arthur; and the creditor departed.

As soon as he was alone, Arthur threw himself into a seat and reflected upon his situation, till ready to give up in despair. Immediate failure seemed inevitable.

To effect a loan was the only possible means of getting through the day; and to make this attempt, under existing circumstances, to his mind involved a question of terror. But the urgency of the case at last drove him to a resolution. He would borrow sufficient to settle this account; nothing more.

Small as was the amount of the required loan, application was made to one and another without success. His haggard aspect was against him. Some met his solicitations with a blunt refusal, while others politely "regretted not being able to accommodate;" but everywhere he was disappointed. For the first time, Arthur felt keenly the decline of his credit.

Dinner hour arrived, but he had no appetite, and did not turn homewards. His absence at this meal having become no very uncommon thing of late, there was no reason to apprehend that it would in this instance cause his wife uneasiness.

There were two individuals to whom pride forbade Arthur to apply; these were the two of all others most likely to aid him in an extremity—his brother and their former employer.

But, driven to desperation, he at length called on the latter, and proffered his request. That gentleman, with few words, but with a hesitancy of manner more

cutting to the young man than anything before encountered, compiled, counting out to him the required sum—one hundred pounds.

His object accomplished—the money once in his possession—Arthur's naturally cheerful heart once more grew lighter. He hurried back to his shop, for he felt that every moment away left him poorer.

He had not been more than an hour returned, when his wife, accompanied by Mrs. Vane, entered.

"Have you come to tell me dinner is ready?" inquired Arthur, meeting them with a smile.

"Not that," was the reply of his wife; "but we are going shopping, and I want some money. 'We are in haste," she added, seeing that he hesitated.

"But what if I have none to spare?" he said, blushing and confused.

"Don't detain us—please don't!" pleaded Sophia.

"Is it absolutely necessary that your shopping should be done to-day?" questioned her husband, seriously.

His wife gazed at him in astonishment. It was the first instance in which he had ever stopped to comment when requested to furnish her with money. A little consideration would have told her that he must have some extraordinary reason for doing it now, but she did not pause for that.

She glanced at her friend, and again at him, looking extremely mortified. Her husband read her feelings, and forgetting all in the yearning to spare her, drew from his wallet a ten pound bank-note, and put it into her hand.

"Fly, Arthur!" she exclaimed, tossing her head contemptuously, and believing, or affecting to believe, the whole was but a piece of pleasantry on the part of her husband. "What do you think I wish to buy—a handful of toys?"

"I know not," was the answer, "but should like to be told."

"Why," exclaimed the wife, in a tone half-playful, half-reproachful, "I am quite ashamed of you. I cannot be accused of ever meddling with your affairs, then surely you ought not to meddle with mine."

And taking his wallet from his seemingly paralyzed hand, she transferred a portion of its contents to her own purse; then tossing the remainder upon the desk, she bade her husband good-day with mock formality, and the two ladies disappeared.

When Arthur recovered himself sufficiently to examine, he found the one hundred pounds, which had been procured with such difficulty, reduced to seventy! What remained to be done? He looked at his watch—it wanted hardly two hours of the time appointed to cancel that debt, and more than one-fourth of the money on which he was depending had vanished. He would yield without another struggle—declare himself bankrupt at once! But no, he could not; his word had been passed; it must be kept. He was in torture, and this torture soon humbled him to such a degree, that he was willing to do anything which might ward off the impending blow. This was a *dernier* resort, and to this he flew. He never paused till he had entered his brother's counting-house. Finding him alone, he lost no time in unfolding all. He had nothing which could justly be called his own—was penniless.

"This result is not unanticipated," observed William, when his brother had finished. "But cheer up! I will render all the assistance you need. Go to my head clerk, tell him to furnish you with whatever present necessity requires. To-morrow we will make further arrangements. Proper management may redeem your losses; this embarrassment need never be made public."

"Do not interrupt," he continued, as the other attempted to speak of gratitude. "I have further to say, and you must hear me patiently. There is one reason, and one only, for the difference in our circumstances."

"What is it, pray?"

"Simply this. My wife has been from first to last acquainted with my circumstances, and yours has not. I do not say that Eva understands every item pertaining to my business as well as I do myself, but she knows pretty nearly the amount of my income, and of course knows what should be the limit of our expenses. There was never a time when she could have made the mistake which Sophia has this afternoon so innocently made—that of appropriating to her own private use money rightly belonging to my creditors."

"I believe you are in the right," said Arthur. "If I could live over the last two years, I would act differently. I would persuade my wife that our mutual good required that the knowledge of my pecuniary situation should not be confined exclusively to myself. But to make known to her my present circumstances—to say to her that we are penniless, I feel that I cannot. Did I love her less?"

"You are indulging a weakness, brother—a false tenderness, which has already been too long indulged. Have an eye to duty, to the future welfare of yourself and her who is so dear to you. Yes, she must know

all; her error must be pointed out to her. I know Sophia too well to have one doubt or fear as to the result. But I will break the intelligence, for I perceive that this is your wish. You say you have an appointment at six—let us go at once."

Arthur repaired to his shop to meet his creditor, William to his brother's house.

From the illuminated parlour came strains of music, Sophia's voice, blending with the rich tones of the piano, in a fashionable air.

As William entered, the music ceased; and he had no sooner opened the parlour door, than the young wife skipped towards him, with a rich Cashmere shawl in her hand.

"Only see, dear Arthur!" she cried, animatedly, "what a beauty! Mrs. Vane bought one exactly like it—and we got them so cheap! Thirty pounds a piece was the price, and fifty for the two is all we paid. Now say 'tis sweet, charming!"

As the last words were uttered she raised her eyes from the pleasing purchase to the face of him she addressed.

"Why, William! Excuse me—I thought it was Arthur," and with a blush, Sophia laid down the shawl.

The other stood regarding her for a moment, and silently contrasted her joyous countenance with the despairing one her husband had worn an hour before. He felt ready to accuse her of heartlessness, as well as indiscretion—of causing his brother's ruin, and afterwards mocking at his misery.

"Pray be seated," she said. "But how strange you look, William! Has anything happened? Speak, I entreat you!" and the colour fled from her cheek.

More generous feelings came to the brother's heart. "Do not alarm yourself," he said, advancing to a chair, "or you will not be in a state to listen to what I have to say. Be calm."

Sophia, though with a face ashy pale, did listen calmly to a plain statement of her husband's difficulties.

"Why have I been kept so long in ignorance?" she asked, in a trembling voice, as William paused. But the truth instantly flashed upon her mind, and herself responded to the query.

"Ah, I refused to hear. I see it all now. It was a false delicacy that prompted me to it. I fancied that, should I seem interested in affairs more especially belonging to my husband, I might be suspected of doubting his ability to manage without my aid. So I have brought him to ruin. Oh, how blindly have I acted!" and in her contrition, she burst into tears.

The soothing words of William, who sincerely pitied her distress, in a measure restored her to composure, just as Arthur's tread was heard upon the steps. William arose, and quietly removed the possible restraint which his presence might impose.

Sophia Manning was a changed woman. The beauty of a shawl was returned to its former proprietor who cheerfully refunded its price. All unnecessary furniture was disposed of, and the wife would gladly have gone into humble lodgings. Mrs. Vane's acquaintance was dropped at once and for ever. The plan which their brother had found so successful was adopted by Arthur and Sophia; and the result was, they were in a few years possessed of a comfortable independence.

L. S. G.

A GHOST STORY.—Some time ago, in the graveyard of Diss, in Norfolk, mysterious sounds were heard to issue from a grave which had not been opened for thirty years. The sounds resembled the striking of a spade into firm earth, or the stroke of a heavy hammer upon rotten wood. The grave alluded to lies near the footpath, and close by a row of old lime-trees. The wind was blowing fresh from the west at the time, and every slight gust caused a collision between two large branches, the sound of which was conducted through the trunk of one of the trees with great intensity to its deep and straggling roots, some of which probably communicated with the brick sides of the grave.

WHAT HAS BECOME OF VOLTAIRE?—A Paris paper states that a rumour, for some time past in circulation, to the effect that the remains of Voltaire are no longer at the Pantheon, has now been confirmed. The tomb is empty, and nothing is known as to what has become of its contents. The discovery was made, it declares, through the following incident:—"The heart of Voltaire, as is generally known, was left by will to the Villette family, and has been deposited in their château; the present Marquis de Villette, a descendant of Voltaire, having resolved to sell the estate, offered the celebrated relic to the Emperor; it was accepted by the Minister of the Interior in the name of his Majesty, and the question then arose as to what should be done with it; the most natural idea was to place it with the body in the tomb at the Pantheon, but a scruple arose; the Pantheon had again become a place of Christian worship, and if the tomb of Voltaire was

still in the vaults, the reason was rather from a consideration that what was done could not be undone than from any other; at all events, no fresh ceremony relative to Voltaire could take place in that building without the authorisation of the Archbishop of Paris; Mgr. Darboy, on being consulted, before making a reply first hinted that there was a belief that, since 1814, the Pantheon possessed nothing belonging to Voltaire but an empty tomb. In consequence, it was determined to verify the truth of the report. A few days back the stone was raised, and, as the archbishop had stated, the tomb was found to be empty! A strict inquiry into the subject has been ordered, and the Emperor has given instructions that the heart shall be enclosed in a silver vase, and deposited either in the great hall of the Imperial Library, or at the Institute of France."

AN AMERICAN VIEW OF ENGLISH CHARACTER.

On the whole, what I have seen raises my preconceived estimate of the English character. It is full of generous, true, and manly qualities; and I doubt if there ever was so high a standard of morality in an aristocracy which has such means for self-indulgence at its command, and which occupies a position that secures it so much deference.

In general, they do not seem to abuse their great advantages. The respect for religion—at least for the forms of it—is universal, and there are few, I imagine of the great proprietors who are not more or less occupied with improving their estates, and with providing for the comfort of their tenantry, while many take a leading part in the great political movements of the time. There never was an aristocracy which combined so much practical knowledge and industry with the advantages of exalted rank.

The Englishman is seen to most advantage in his country home; for he is constitutionally both domestic and rural in his habits. His fireside and his farm—these are the places in which one sees his simple and warm-hearted nature most freely unfolded.

There is a shyness in an Englishman—a natural reserve—which makes him cold to strangers, and difficult of approach. But once corner him in his own house, a frank and full expansion will be given to his feelings, that we should look for in vain in the colder Yankee, and a depth not to be found in the light and superficial Frenchman—speaking of nationalities, not individualities.

The English are the most truly rural in their tastes and habits of any people in the world. I am speaking of the higher classes. The aristocracy of other countries affect the camp and the city. But the English love their old castles and country seats with a patriotic love. They are fond of country sports. Every man shoots or hunts.

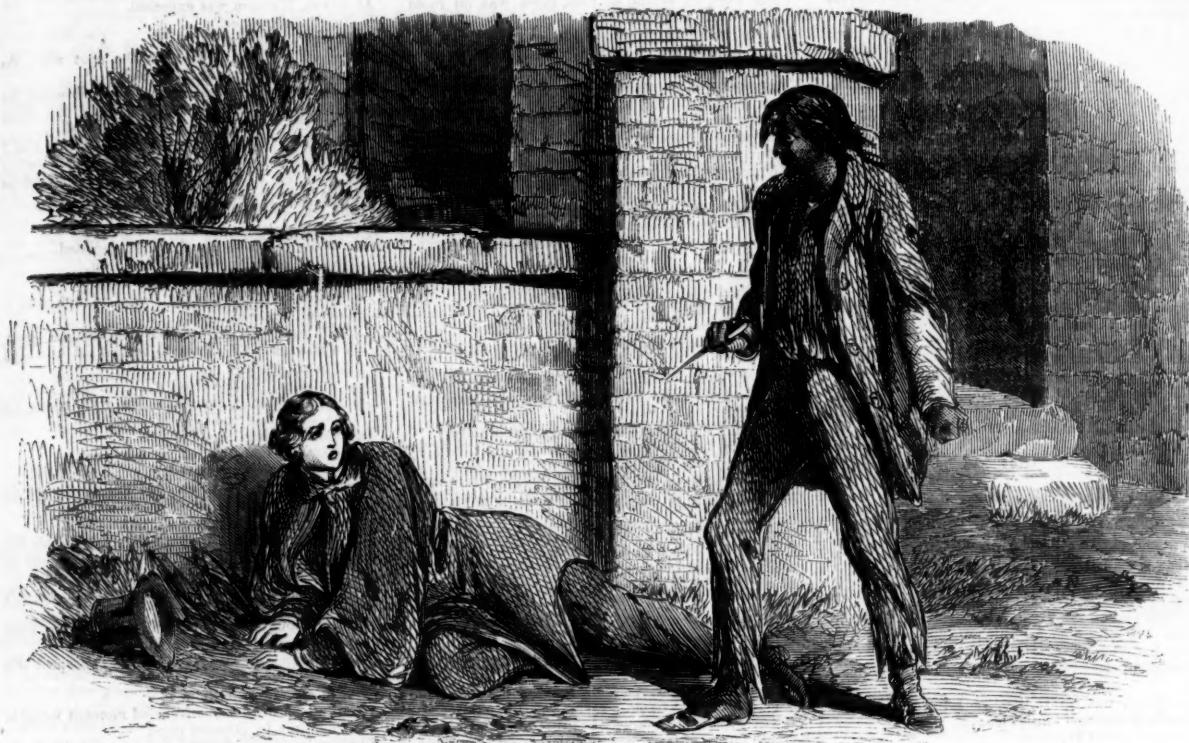
The character of an Englishman, under its most refined aspect, has some disagreeable points which jar unpleasantly on the foreigner not accustomed to them. The consciousness of national superiority, combined with natural feelings of independence, gives him an air of arrogance, though it must be owned that this is never betrayed in his own house—I may almost say in his own country.

The English—the men of fortune—all travel. Yet how little sympathy they show for other people or institutions, and how slight is the interest they take in them! They are islanders, cut off from the great world. But their island is, indeed, a world of its own. With all their faults, never has the sun shone—if one may use the expression in reference to England—on a more noble race, or one that has done more for the great interests of humanity.—William H. Prescott.

THE DUKE DE MODENA has gone on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

THE DYING ELK.—I have read of a man who had killed several elks in his time. One day, when out hunting, he came upon a couple, and took aim at the largest one. The ball struck the animal in a mortal part, but it did not immediately fall to the ground. Meanwhile, it kept getting weaker and weaker from loss of blood, which gushed forth from the wound, but still kept its eyes steadily fixed on the man, looking at him in a most reproachful manner. Moved with compassion, he stepped forward to put an end to the poor beast's sufferings with his "tolle-kniv," when, just as he was going to give the *coup de grâce*, the animal cast such a look at him, that he was obliged to turn aside till it was dead. Meanwhile, the second elk, as is often the case, had returned to look after its companion. Here was a chance! Two elks in one day is not such a despicable bag to one gun. But the ordeal through which his nerves had recently passed had completely upset him, so that he could not find in his heart to shoot it. Then and there he made a solemn vow that as long as he lived he would never raise gun any more against an elk, for it seemed to him as if he had for all the world been guilty of murder.—Sport in Norway.

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[THE MURDER OF CLARA MANSFIELD.]

A YOUNG GIRL FROM THE COUNTRY.

By VANE IRETON ST. JOHN,

Author of "The Queen of Night," "In Spite of the World," &c.

CHAPTER LXX.

Beautiful were they: yet more terrible—
Their very loveliness a cloak to sin. *Elwin.*

THE atmosphere of the room in which Eli Lamberg was working was so impregnated with the odour of the subtle poison that it was with difficulty that Mangles Worsop could breathe.

Nevertheless, he entered resolutely though feebly, and closing the door behind him, sank into a chair.

Eli Lamberg was too prudent a man to express any annoyance at this intrusion.

He smiled faintly.

"You are quite an unexpected guest," he said. "I had no idea you were well enough to come down." "I am at death's door," returned the antiquary, "but I felt myself compelled to come."

"Why?"

"Because I heard a cry as of some one in pain, and the aroma proceeding from this room almost suffocated me. What is it you are doing?"

"Making flowers, as you see."

The old man shook his head.

"I know better than that," he said. "I have heard you mention a name I well know—the name of one who, if he be your employer, will inevitably deceive you."

"Of whom do you speak?"

"Of Mr. Lorrimer."

Eli started.

"Do you know him?" he said.

"I do. I know him well. Do you?"

"You introduced him to me, but I imagined he was but a mere acquaintance. What do you know of him?"

"I know this, that he is ruined; that he possesses neither character nor money. What you do for him will never be paid for; whereas, on the other side, you might earn a mine of wealth."

Exaggerated as were the old man's words, Eli yet felt assured that in them there was an abundance of common sense.

"Come," he said, "explain your meaning. I am not at all wedded to my employer. My plan is to make the best market."

"If you wish me to do as you profess," returned the old antiquary, "you must leave this room and

come with me to my bedchamber. I am too weak to be out of my bed, and, more than that, the atmosphere of this room is stifling."

While he had been conversing, Eli had been busy with his flowers, and they were now completed.

"There," he said, as he rose and placed them beneath a glass globe—"there, are they not magnificent?"

The antiquary gazed at them with a kind of timid admiration.

"Yes," he answered, "they are splendid—beautiful as the lightning which dazzles you with its loveliness ere it strikes to kill. But come, let us ascend."

What that conference was no one ever knew.

The next morning Mangles Worsop was dead, and his friends took possession of his effects.

What personal property he might have possessed they know not.

What they did know, however, was that for one who gathered together, as he had done, articles of *virtu* of every kind, those found were very few in number.

Eli Lamberg professed himself greatly grieved at the sudden decease of his friend, as he chose to call the antiquary, but whether this sorrow was merely a cloak to other feelings was not discoverable.

It was certain that there were no traces of foul play—it was quite established, indeed, that Mangles Worsop died a natural death; but it was not equally certain that Eli had not appropriated to his own use a certain amount of properties which should have been discoverable in the house.

At the end of the time allowed to Eli Lamberg by Lady Isabel, the bouquet of flowers was left at Casry House.

Not secretly, as she had desired, however.

Eli presented himself at the house, and desired to see Lady Castleton.

When Laura entered, he unlocked a small box he had brought with him, and drew from it a stand covered with a glass globe.

Beneath this was the artificial bouquet—fresh, bright, and beautiful.

"That is very exquisite, sir," said the marchioness, admiringly.

"It is, my lady," returned the Jew, obsequiously. "I have done my best to produce the very utmost perfection in colour."

"They are indeed most perfect," said Laura. "One could almost vow they had perfume."

"Yes, indeed, my lady; but they have none, of course—he! he!" cried the Jew, with an hysterical laugh.

"For whom are they?" asked the marchioness.

"They were ordered by the marquis, my lady," said Eli. "They are intended to be worn by the lady who is to have the honour of marrying your son, madam."

"Poor girl!" murmured Laura, "when shall we see her again?"

Then she added aloud:

"The marquis shall see them immediately he returns home. I can assure you, meanwhile, that he will be greatly pleased at the manner in which you have executed his order."

The surprising part of the matter was, that the Marquis of Castleton, when he returned home, expressed no astonishment at beholding the flowers; but, after declaring his delight at their beauty, took them with him to his study.

On the chimney-board of this study was a second bouquet under a glass globe—a bouquet which exactly resembled the first.

The marquis placed them side by side, with a strange and bitter smile.

"Rest there," he said, "silent witnesses of a fearful deed—silent punishers of guilt!"

The marriage of Clara Mansfield and Reginald Conyers was not disapproved of by Lady Isabel.

It cemented together the interests of three persons—fearful interests—the interest of criminals thirsting after blood.

From Reginald Isabel had heard the story of the sham marriage, and the flight of Cicely Crowe.

"The affair was managed in your usual clumsy fashion, Reginald," she said. "I have good reason to hate that girl, for through her my designs were defeated. Good reason have I, then, to be incensed with you for allowing her to slip through your fingers when once in your power."

Clara, who had married Reginald for the purpose of having some one to aid her in her diabolical scheme, was not slow in discovering that she had made one great mistake—perhaps the greatest in her life.

Reginald was a villain, of that there could be no doubt; neither was there a doubt that he was gradually emerging into the ruffian.

But he was a villain of the meaner stamp: in him the vices of the mother were developed in a lesser form.

Rascality was his forte: he had neither inclination nor boldness enough to commit great crimes.

While therefore she found him to be prepared for any amount of swindling, she discovered that he was not bad enough to stoop to take human life.

The one against whom her deadly hate was directed

in a far greater degree even than against Ralph Conyers was Marston Grey.

She well knew that the most terrible punishment she could now inflict upon Ralph, was the destruction of Cicely Crowe.

This project was in the hands of those who had as great an interest in destroying her as she had.

Again and again she urged her husband to assist her in the compassing of Marston's ruin, but again and again he had refused.

Resolved, however, to accomplish it, she set to work alone.

Against Marston himself, the blow was to be directed.

To attack his heart as they were attacking the heart of Reginald Conyers, would be to murder her own sister.

There seemed only one chance of success.

Benedick Bentley, who had assisted Reginald in all his schemes of villainy, was not the kind of person who would be of any service to her.

What then was she to do?

Could she apply to a stranger?

Could she trust her secret to one whose character she knew not?

Could she do the fatal deed herself?

No.

The eyes of Marston Grey had on all occasions discovered her.

They would discover her again.

There was only one person in London who could assist her in her enterprise, and a terrible fate led her to a meeting with him, ere yet the idea was fully formed in her mind.

This was an Indian servant, who had been discharged by Marston Grey for dishonesty.

Far from feeling gratitude to his master for abstaining from punishing him for his thefts, he cherished an undying hatred towards him, and had only neglected to revenge himself because he had lacked an opportunity.

Rana Sahib was an Indian, as I have said, and I need scarcely describe him at length.

He was a type of his class.

We all know these Indians, dark-skinned, hollow-eyed, with high cheek-bones and repulsive mouths.

Rana was in abject poverty when Clara met with him accidentally in the street, and he started suspiciously at her voice.

Clara had not yet discarded her male attire.

She and her husband were supposed to be brothers, and she had cause to be grateful for this male disguise. Not a single person had as yet suspected her sex, and she was therefore secure from all her enemies.

"What is it you want from me?" he asked, as he glanced with a scowl at her, never once recognizing in the young man before him, the form of the elegant lady he had once known.

"To put money in your pocket."

The man laughed.

"I'm afraid among these rags you would with difficulty find a pocket," he said, with a bitter kind of jest, "but seriously, who are you, and what do you want?"

The man spoke with a strong accent, but his English was very good.

"You speak to the point, certainly;" but this is not the place for explanation. Come to my lodgings, or I will come to yours. Then we can talk."

The Indian smiled bitterly.

"I look," he said, "well fitted to accompany a gentleman like you to his lodgings."

"That is my affair. If I do not object, why should you?"

"Besides, how am I to know your sincerity. No—we'll adjourn to some place of entertainment—then we can talk at our leisure."

"Very well," returned Clara; "go where you please. I will follow."

Without again speaking, the Indian turned on his heel, and Clara, supposing that he meant her to follow, followed accordingly.

CHAPTER LXXI.

The dagger's point which at his breast she held, Seemed to hang back as if the crime it knew; And back to her own bosom swiftly flew.

Carter.

The place to which the Indian took Clara Mansfield, was a little public-house in Thames Street.

It was a low place.

Not only low, but dirty.

And the company were both.

You saw there the refuse of the river-side population—Lascars, discharged English sailors, and nondescript people who belonged to no special occupation.

Clara hesitated a moment as her eyes fell upon the motley group within.

But the hesitation was only momentary.

Upon such an errand as hers, there was no room for an instant's hanging back.

Besides, she was not dressed in any *outre* fashion, but simply and unostentatiously, and she was not likely, therefore, to attract any notice.

They entered together; and, going into the little parlour behind the bar, sat down.

Clara ordered some spirits, of which the famished Indian partook eagerly.

"And now," he said, after he had imbibed strength and courage, "now who are you?"

"I am an enemy of your enemy," she said. "I allude to Marston Grey."

The man's eyes glistened.

A diabolical gleam of hatred overspread his countenance.

He extended his arm across the table, and grasped one of Clara's delicate hands in his black palm.

"You are then, my friend," he said. "What do you wish to propose to me? To take revenge on that man?—I will do it, even if I peril my head to do it."

"Good," said Clara. "That is my wish. I hate—I loathe this man—he stands in my path—he must be removed."

"Give me the means—tell me the opportunity."

"Listen; I will explain to you readily. In Lisburne Cottage, on the Harrow Road, there resides, at the present moment, a lady with her son and daughter. The young lady is engaged in marriage to Marston Grey."

Again the diabolical gleam crossed the man's face.

"I see," he said, "I am to kill her."

Clara clutched his arm.

Such an idea as this almost threw her off her guard.

"No—no," she cried. "She is my—she is a friend of mine."

"I see—I see!" answered the man, in a tone of disappointment, "she is your rival."

This was the best possible way of diverting his mind from the real track.

"Yes—yes," said Clara; "but that does not matter. Marston Grey visits every evening at Lisburne Cottage—at ten o'clock he leaves. On the road there is a spot where you can hide. It is a lonely road; no one will interrupt you. Say you will do this, and a hundred pounds shall be yours."

"I will do it—fear not," replied the Indian. "Tell me all details now, and it shall be done."

Half-an-hour sufficed to explain everything, and Clara returned to her husband's house with a bosom swelling with triumphant malignity.

Lisburne Cottage was situated, as I have said, in the Harrow Road.

It was called cottage on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle apparently, for it was, in reality, a handsome and commanding villa.

In this place, Mrs. Mansfield had fixed her town residence.

Ellersley Grange had grown hateful to her since the fate of Gabriel Desney; and now that the terrible story of Clara's guilt had been revealed to her, the whole neighbourhood had become an object of horror.

Here, then, she retired with her son and daughter, until such time as Louisa should become the wife of Marston.

About half a mile from the cottage were some unfinished houses.

They had long since been abandoned by the workmen, and stood there as monuments of folly or recklessness.

Either some surveyor had condemned them as improperly built, or some one had pounced upon them, and placed them in Chancery.

At any rate, there they stood incomplete for years, until the walls were black, and the paper of the rooms moulder away, and the woodwork was rotting.

It was in this place that Clara had arranged that the Indian should post himself, and, springing upon his prey, drag him within the shadow of the houses, and despatch him.

Night came.

A dark, cloudy night.

There was no moon visible; not a star twinkled in the sky.

The road was like a broad band of black.

The houses were shadowless; but their dark outlines could still be distinguished against the dull grey of the sky.

To and fro paced a grim figure, undistinguishable, be it said, to any one who was not quite close to it.

It paced to and fro within the wall, and ever and anon stopped to listen.

It was Clara Mansfield.

She had arranged to meet the Indian at ten.

It was now half-past, but there was no sign of him.

"That wretched man is deceiving me," she said, aloud. "Never mind, I will be even with him. Once the deed is done, he will find his own reckoning soon!"

At eleven, Marston was expected.

It struck the quarter.

Why was Clara there?

Why had she ventured near the spot when she would not herself commit the deed?

Because her soul thirsted for blood—because her eyes longed to feast themselves upon the dying agonies of the man she had loved and hated.

"To think," she cried, madly—"to think that I should be outwitted and deceived by this slave, whom I had resolved to use and destroy. And yet he cannot have suspected that I am a woman!"

"And yet—" she said.

This saving clause was not sufficient.

Her words had been heard and appreciated.

Little did she think who was listening.

The Indian had been there since nine.

He had seen Clara's arrival, but had not cared to make himself known to her.

"Ah!" muttered he, between his clenched teeth. "I am a slave, am I? I am to be got rid of when I have done my work?"

He crept out from the shadow.

Clara was leaning against a low wall, where she could see down the road.

She was listening intently.

The sound of footsteps fell upon her ear.

"He comes," she murmured.

Hardly had the words escaped her lips, when the knife of the Indian was plunged into her back.

She staggered and uttered a loud cry.

The murderous weapon again descended—this time penetrating between her breasts—deep, deep into the flesh.

With a second cry and a smothered groan, she sank to the earth.

Oh, the thoughts that swam through her brain as she sank down upon the earth to die!

Oh, the visions fled—the hours misspent—the sweet pulsations of delirious love!

We cannot chronicle them.

What passed in that one frenzied moment would be ill-recorded in a lengthened page.

The Indian stooped down to complete his deadly work.

But a strong arm intervened for a moment between her and death.

Marston Grey, the man she had meant to murder, rushed forward to her rescue, not knowing who she was, and struck the Indian to the earth.

Then, as if by magic, policemen sprang up from dark corners, and before he could attempt an escape, the stunned Rana was in custody.

The brave man who had worked so hard all his life for the happiness of others, and so little for his own, carried the almost inanimate form of Clara to her mother's house.

He felt it was a woman's body he was carrying.

Instinct made him guess whose it was.

When Clara opened her eyes for a moment ere she closed them again in eternal sleep, her first glance fell upon Marston.

By his side were Mrs. Mansfield and Louisa.

Both had for a moment forgotten, in the terrible agony of that moment, the crime which had alienated her from them.

She cast a glance of annoyance at the doctor who had been called in.

Then she motioned to Marston that she desired to whisper to him.

He leaned over her.

"Send that man away," she said faintly.

"He is the doctor—he will save you."

"No—no. Ask him. He will tell you I have but a few moments to live. I want no strangers with me."

Marston drew the doctor aside.

"What is your opinion?" he asked.

"As to what?"

"Can this lady live?"

"For half-an-hour—not more. It is a wonder she lives now."

"Can you afford her any relief?"

The doctor shook his head.

"I fear not!" he said, "I fear not. The wound is mortal."

"Then I will ask you to leave us for a short time."

The doctor retired.

Marston returned to the bedside, over which Louisa and her mother were still leaning.

Clara looked wistfully at him.

"Marston," she said, "will you believe me on my death-bed?"

"I will try to do so."

She stretched out her thin hand towards him and took his.

"Marston, you think me guilty of the murder of Gabriel Desney?"

"I do; I have heard the evidence of a credible witness."

"He was mistaken. I swear to you now, on my

lying bed, that I did not kill Gabriel Desney. I might in my heart have wished to do so, but I did not. He fell into the Springhead by accident in drawing himself back from me."

"Heaven grant it may have been so!" said Marston.

Then he was silent.

His reason condemned the idea of belief.

The scene, so trying to all, was soon ended.

The life ebbed away from the terrible wound in her breast, and so far as she was concerned, her secret was permitted to die with her.

On the trial of the Indian, he declared that he had stabbed Clara in self-defence, and he was acquitted.

The trial was hushed up as far as possible, and Reginald Conyers kept himself out of the way.

Possessed now of a fortune sufficient to enable him to remain in England in spite of his family, he acted as most people do in such circumstances.

Finding himself under no restraint, he immediately resolved to go to Paris; and a week after Clara's death saw him quitting London.

Lady Isabel was thus left alone in England to watch the workings of her terrible vengeance, which, now that Clara was dead and Reginald gone, concerned her alone.

CHAPTER LXXII.

And they were one! Swift moments those of bliss.
Fleet as the changeable rapture of a kiss. *Blackett.*

The convict, Gilbert Deathson, raised Cicely gently from the mound in the churchyard.

His exclamation, on recognizing her, surprised no one.

She did, indeed, seem dead.

A livid pallor had overspread her features, and her limbs appeared rigid.

But heaven had ordained it otherwise.

It had saved her for a much greater trial.

Her eyes slowly opened, glanced at the convict, and then with a shudder she closed them once more, as if to shut out a dream of horror.

The scene was scarcely one calculated to reassure her.

The sky was grey, cold, monotonous.

On one side rose the ruins of the church, shattered by the conflagration and blackened by the smoke.

Round them were the tombs, white and grey with time, and here and there leaning aslant, from the subidence of the earth.

The convict was in his prison-dress, for though he had not yet stood his trial he was a convict under the former conviction.

His face was dirty and bleeding, and his eyes wild and haggard.

Gilbert guessed her thoughts.

"Miss Crowe," he whispered, gently, "you need not fear me. I am one who owes you much: I am Gilbert Deathson."

A faint smile passed over her lips, and her eyes again opened.

"I am hungry and cold," she said; "I feel as if I were dying."

Her words were uttered in a whisper—a low whisper—like the voice of one in the last stage of life.

But Gilbert heard her words and understood her. They produced a doubtful feeling in his mind.

What was he to do?

He could not leave Cicely there, to die of cold and hunger.

Yet how could he take her to shelter?

He set her upon a tomb, placing her so that her back rested against the headstone.

"Miss Crowe," he said, "I've just been to the town and bought a few biscuits. Eat one or two—that may revive you, and then I must take you somewhere."

The girl eagerly ate the proffered biscuits.

She knew not that he was hiding from justice—knew not that he was hungry and cold too.

She was too wretched to think; and had she thought, she would have imagined that it was by some strange coincidence they had met.

One after another she ate the proffered biscuits while the starving man looked on and smiled.

Who can say that this man, bad as he was, had not some elements of goodness within him?

During this strange repast he had time to think. At last he made up his mind.

"Where do you wish to go?" he asked.

"To Thornton."

"To Thornton!" he exclaimed in surprise, "why, you are in Thornton—this is Thornton Church—do you not see it—do you not recognize its ruined walls?"

"No, the night was so dark, and my mind so bewildered that I recognized and understood nothing. Now I see where I am. Thanks to heaven and to

you, Gilbert Deathson, I am spared to see my friends once more, at the very moment I imagined that death would take me for ever from their arms. Lead me to Milton Hall at once, my friend—it is there I wish to go."

She rose and tried to walk.

The effort was useless.

She sank down again at once wearied and exhausted.

Gilbert, in a few words, explained his position.

"If I show myself," he said, "I am lost. I must carry you to the hall, but once there, I must conceal myself again."

"They will find you some method of escape," returned Cicely; "but tell me whom do you believe to be the author of your misfortune?"

"Lady Isabel."

Cicely sighed.

"Still the same—still the same!" she said; "but come, let us be going. I will try again to walk."

"It is useless," cried the convict as she stood up.

He took her in his strong arms as he would have done a child, and bore her away through the tombs.

Many times during that strange journey he stopped and listened, and hid himself and his charge in shadowy corners.

The noises which alarmed him, however, were but the voices of the night—the sighing of the wind—the swaying of the trees—the cracking of branches.

At length the gates of Milton Hall were reached, and boldly, as if he had nothing to fear from the law, Gilbert Deathson entered with his burden.

Laura had remained behind with her brother at Milton Hall, to aid him in his search for Cicely, while the marquis and marchioness went to Caerly House.

Both of them rushed down to the door when they heard that a man dressed in a strange garb had brought a fainting girl into the house.

By this time, Cicely had been taken into the dining-room and laid upon a couch.

Ralph recognized her instantly and rushed towards her.

"Cicely, dearest one," he cried, as he knelt down by her side, and kissed her again and again; "where have you been? From what terrible peril have you escaped?"

Briefly she told her story.

While she did so, Gilbert sat awkwardly upon the chair which Cicely had compelled him to occupy.

When she had finished, Ralph turned to Gilbert.

"My friend," he said, extending his hand, "my friend, you have rendered me a service for which I can never repay you sufficiently."

Gilbert rose, and looked at the proffered hand, as if he were afraid to touch it.

His father had been an educated man, and in the position of a gentleman; but Gilbert knew that his own hands were stained, as it were, with crime, and unfit, therefore, to grasp those of an honest man.

"Well, sir—I'm sure, sir," he began in a hesitating, doubtful way.

Ralph still held out his palm.

"Come—do not be afraid of it," he cried, "never mind the past, think of the future. You are not too old yet to make amends to society; and if you choose to be an honest man, I will give you the means of becoming one."

Gilbert grasped the hand proffered him.

"Sir," he murmured with tears in his eyes, "sir, you know not the earnest desire which is in my breast to be an honest man. But in England it is an impossibility for such as me. I am hunted down by the police; and if I am seen when I leave your house this night, I shall be placed again in the prison I have but just escaped from."

"What is impossible here, is not so abroad," said Ralph. "I will provide you with funds with which you and your mother can fly to America. There you will be safe. I —"

Gilbert interrupted him with a smile.

"Sir," he cried, "the best thing at the present moment is to make one feel an honest man, and at peace with society, would be to give me something to eat. I and Miss Crowe are starving."

The next evening saw Gilbert Deathson and his mother, both well disguised, on their way to London.

There they were to conceal themselves until Ralph had communicated with the marquis, and obtained the money requisite for their escape.

On that evening also died John Shadow, the man of many sins and many sorrows.

Ralph was with him a few moments before his death and gave him his forgiveness.

"There is now," said the young heir of Castleton, as he wended his way homewards from the infirmary where Shadow died, "there is now no fear for Cicely. She is with me, and shall never leave me. In a few days she shall be my wife, and she shall never be alone until Isabel Ashton is discovered and punished or sent far away beyond our reach."

Vain hopes!

Wild delusion of love!

Little did he imagine what a terrible chain of crime had been wrought, and how closely and inevitably it was surrounding them!

Matters progressed with the utmost steadiness and pleasantness in the Castleton family for the next few days.

Laura and Ralph, both radiantly happy, escorted Cicely and her delighted father up to London, where they were located in Caerly House.

Every arrangement was now made for the marriage of Cicely and Ralph, and at length the eventful morning arrived.

Cicely looked lovely, dressed as she was in a white silk robe.

On that day also, Marston Grey and Louise were to be married.

The death of Clara had precluded for awhile all idea of marriage, but at the earnest solicitation of Ralph, they consented to make up the party.

It was scarcely three weeks, therefore, after the terrible end of the ill-fated Clara Desney, that a large and gaily-dressed party were assembled at Caerly House to witness the double bridal.

The two brides were rivals in loveliness, though in nothing else, and as they stepped from the carriage and passed into the church, many were the murmured expressions of admiration.

As is usually the case at weddings of any note, the church was crowded with a throng of well-dressed persons.

Among them were distinguishable three individuals. One of these was short and slim, dressed in irreproachable black, and apparently in ordinary health, but whose eyes glared with a ghastly and feverish light, as if food had for days been denied.

This was Lady Isabel.

The other two persons were evidently friends or colleagues, although they did not remain together or speak.

They seemed, however, to keep close to Isabel, and ever and anon exchanged furtive glances.

The service began.

Every man and woman in the church gazed with admiration at the two brides to whom the solemn words were being addressed, and more especially at the one who bore in the bosom of her robe a magnificent bouquet of artificial flowers, which closely resembled that which Laura, Marchioness of Castleton, held in a silver stem in her hand.

This one was Cicely.

The service progressed towards its completion.

The colour went and came on the cheek of Cicely Crowe, and then a deadly pallor succeeded to the fluctuating tints.

But no one was surprised.

A marriage, be it ever so happy a one, gives rise to as many tears as smiles.

Her paleness was accordingly attributed to emotion, nothing more.

The service ended.

Ralph Conyers, heir to the Marquis of Castleton, and Cicely Crowe, the Young Girl from the Country, were man and wife.

Just as the party were about to leave the altar, however, there was a stifled cry, and Cicely fell, pale and apparently dead, into the arms of her young husband.

The alarmed company crowded round.

The old marquis, more terrified than all, pushed the throng aside and approached her.

"Great heavens!" he murmured, as he snatched the flowers from her bosom, "can I, after all my care, have given to her the wrong bouquet?"

(To be continued)

FATE OF DR. LIVINGSTONE.—The Cape mail brings no news of Dr. Livingstone. Dr. Mellor, of the Zambesi exploring expedition, has returned to England. It is feared now that Dr. Livingstone is no more. He is known to have been wounded in a skirmish between the Maganja and Ajawa tribes, the English taking the side of the former against the Ajawas, who are slave-dealers. From the effects of his wounds, and the want of proper medicines, food, and treatment, this great missionary, it is feared, has succumbed.

CUNNING AND SAGACITY OF THE FOX.—One pack of hounds had repeatedly dislodged a fox from the wood, and just as frequently lost him in a particular meadow. Sometimes the scent suddenly failed in one part of the meadow, sometimes in another; but, wherever it happened, there was no trace of any hole or place where he could conceal himself. So determined were the huntsmen to catch the animal that had so often foiled them, that meet after meet was fixed at the same spot, and the same wood drawn, the fox always going away at the first sound of the hounds among the underwood, and thus getting a good start, and invariably taking the direction of this meadow, till at last the farmer to whom the cows feeding in it

belonged complained of their being injured by these frequent alarms. The secret was at last discovered by a boy, who had been sent by the farmer to drive the cows into a corner of the meadow when he saw the "field" coming. He saw the fox come through the hedge into the meadow, check his speed, look about him, and then rush towards a red cow and spring on its back, holding on so tightly with mouth and legs that the rushing hither and thither of the frightened animal did not shake him off. Similarly, another fox disappeared several times in succession in a rather deep brook, and every effort to get on the scent again was unavailing. It was at last found that he swam to a hole cut through the bank on which the hedge grew and backed into it; and here he remained, with his nose just above water, till the hounds had been driven away to try their luck at another cover.

LOVE'S TEST.

"AND, above all, Amy, send and keep Howard away. Remember, you are pale and faded, while she is young and fair; you are frank and guileless, she is the most consummate flirt I ever saw. Forgive me if I speak too plainly. But a year ago I saw a heart broken, a lover false, for this same siren's sake; and saw, too, the false woe punished later by her scorn; so my heart fears and trembles when I know your quiet dove-cot is to be invaded, and I risk even your frown to warn you."

I had pondered over this sentence for nearly an hour, till every word seemed burned into my heart. I knew that it was not true affection that dictated the harsh lines; that my cousin Mabel, soured by disappointment, would have denied me the one ray of light in my cheerless life, if she could have done so, and, failing in this, was only too ready to dash the poison of doubt into my cup of life. Send Howard away! On what pretext? Was I afraid to trust his love when he had so proved it?

Mine had been a strange, dreary life, and well might my cousin Mabel call me pale and faded. My parents were rigidly religious, training me, their only child, to abhor all levity as sin, all cheerful pleasures as temptations, and to view life as a period of harsh, stern training for eternity. From a mere child my heart had rebelled against this creed. I loved light, flowers, music, and would sing, dance, and laugh, whenever the frown or rebuke was beyond reach. Yet, as I grew older, my desires were cramped to the iron rule, and I scarcely dared lift my eyes lest I should see some temptation to draw me from my narrow path of duty. My mother died when I had just completed my sixteenth year, and sorrow broke my father's heart and destroyed his mind. In their stern, grave fashion, they had loved too truly for him to endure the separation. At first he was only sad and silent, but his business was neglected; he grew more and more reserved, till a melancholy madness reduced him to a state of almost entire idiocy.

So, at seventeen, I found myself poor, and with a helpless father dependent on me for support. I began life, therefore, as a daily governess; and cheerfully went through the drudgery of teaching all day, to sit beside my poor father and try to win one smile in the long evenings. Then Howard came! He was a distant relative of my dead mother's, and came to reside near us to study medicine. It was opening a new life for me. His teaching drew me nearer to true happiness than I had ever been in my old dreary life. I grew to love nature and religion; to see in the gorgeous sunset, the tiny flower, the melody of the bird's carol, the evidences of Almighty goodness, not temptations to idleness; and he showed me that the talents, sent from heaven, are not snared to our feet, if we bring their fruits humbly and offer them in the service of the giver. I can never write what I owe Howard! His frank, sunny smile repaid me for my exertion; his voice, ringing music far down in my heart, encouraged me to every new effort; and if my pen began, by degrees, to win the bread I had gained so hardly before; if the music in my heart, bursting into poetry, won for me name and gold, it was Howard who found out the hidden springs; Howard who waked the song to life.

Two years passed in a dream of delight, then Howard asked me to be his wife. He was going to India, with a friend, to practice his profession and win a fortune for his bride, who was to wait his return. I dared not bid him hope! I dared not promise to love my father, nor to burden him with such a heavy care; so, with a breaking heart, I bade him go free. And now, after twelve long years, he had come to me again. My father lay in the churchyard, and Howard had come home, rich and courted, to seek out again his pale, plain cousin, and tell her of his constant love.

My cousin Mabel knew the story, and when she wrote to me of Kate Harrington's visit, she knew how

cruelly she was wounding me. This same Kate was a niece of my father's; born in England, educated in Paris, and now coming home on a visit to her kinsfolk. Mabel had met her in Paris, and she was with her when Kate took it into her wayward head to go and see the "old-maid cousin," and wrote me her self-invited proposal. I could scarcely decline the visit, and my answer had drawn forth Mabel's letter.

It was useless to ponder over it, so I put it aside and tried to forget it. Yet, when in the evening I stood, circled by Howard's arms, by the mirror in my wee parlour, I felt the words stinging me. I was pale and faded. Fourteen years of toil and care, had wasted my form, thinned my cheeks, and driven the lustre from my eyes. While Howard had grown handsome, broader, more manly and graceful; while the stamp of intellect had made his clear dark eyes more earnest and beautiful, had set its noble seal on his lip and brow, I had let sorrow and hopelessness crush me, till beside his vigorous manhood, I was a faded, worthless flower.

He saw that I was sad, and was more than usually bright and cheerful, till I found myself talking of books and papers with my old relish: found that he was opening my heart and feeding my mind as in the days of "auld lang syne."

Kate came the next day, and I laughed at my fears. I had fancied her a tall blonde, with dashing manners and marvellous beauty; she was a fair, pretty girl, with large, grey eyes, soft brown hair, and quiet, almost shy, manners. As for flirting with Howard, she scarcely noticed him. To me she was caressing and loving, winning me to admire her, to wonder at the power of her large eyes, and listen eagerly to the music of her fresh, sweet voice.

With her shy, graceful manner, her gentle touch, her soft, beseeching eyes, she fairly magnetised me; and when she had lulled every doubt, driven back each suspicion, she began her game.

I know now how she lost her heart to Howard. She fully appreciated his talents, beauty, and manliness, and, above all, his wealth. Brought up to worship gold, she bowed down before his bank account, and determined to win him.

Very contemptuously she regarded the pale, faded old maid who stood in the way; but it was better to blind her than openly to bid her defiance.

I understand now, though I did not then, the soft cooing voice in which she invariably addressed Howard; the deference to his opinions; the gentle feminine ways she affected for him.

Every art of dress, too, was brought into play; and the soft cashmeres, the rich lustreless silks, the fine laces, were each and all part of the battery besieging his heart.

Then walks were planned, at hours when she knew I was engaged. She would watch for him, and admit him without calling me down; and, at last, painfully and slowly, I awoke to the truth.

I saw how her voice in song held Howard enthralled—I marked how deferential his tone was to her, and I clasped my misery closely into my heart, and drew aside from the unequal contest.

What was I, to battle for my love with her?

No! better to let my crushed heart die silently than to give him pain by showing its bleeding agony.

So I drew back, pleading a thousand engagements to avoid being a third. I opened the piano, to let her pour forth her wonderful voice in song; I feigned weariness, to leave them alone; and, if I grew paler and sadder, were not her charms lovelier by contrast? If my eyes drooped wearily, hers burned and flashed, or melted and softened with magical beauty.

I remember well, one evening, when, with no light but the rays of the full moon poured into the room, Kate sat down to the piano.

Softly, like a far-off echo of dream-land, the notes trickled from the pliant fingers; dreamily, with the cadences melting into one another, she played one of Beethoven's symphonies, the heavy base chords softened and mellowed, that no harsh burst should break the soothing spell. I, who could never master the intricacies of instrumental music, and who considered it a feat to play the accompaniments of a song, listened wonderingly to the marvellous command she had won over the keys, till the soothing spell held me quiet, lost, wrapt in the delicious harmonies.

A long sigh from Howard roused me. He, too, loved music, and I could see, by the moonlight, how he was drinking in these soft sounds. Softly I stole away.

After a time the music ceased, and still it was long before I heard him go out. Then, flushed and triumphant, Kate came to my side. Her good-night kiss was given hurriedly, and, as she left my room, I could hear her whisper, "He loves me! He loves me!" softly, as if not meant for my ear.

Ah! my blind folly! I let the days slip by without one effort to regain the heart that was my sheet-anchor for this life; drooping in my loneliness, trying to make his happiness my reward, and never watching

the dear face to see if it flashed its old look of love upon me.

One hot day, when the twilight was gathering, I lay on the sofa, tired and languid, sick with suffering. Kate had gone to ride with some friends, promising to be back for Howard's evening call. As I lay, musing sadly, somebody bent over me, kissing me fondly, and the voice that made my heart's music spoke.

"Amy, darling, you are ill, and keeping it from me. I have watched you, day after day, trying to conceal your pain, growing pale and sad with some hidden suffering. You creep from me till I fear we are drifting far away from each other. Oh! my love, my wife, why are you so white and sad? I had hoped to let my love so circle your life, that the past sorrow should be forgotten, the long winter of your youth be gladdened by the coming summer. Amy," and his tons melted into a pathos that stirred my very soul, "have I been mistaken? Have you ceased to love me? You are so good, so pure, and your life has seemed so saintly and set apart, tell me if my worldly self, full of this life's cares, sorrows, and joys, has become repugnant to you? Tell me the truth, Amy, if you break my heart."

And with bitter, repentant tears, I told him all the truth, sparing none of the degrading suspicions, none of the bitter doubts, humbling myself to his very feet to be lifted to his heart again, to cast out all fear and doubt, to know truly how Kate's witcheries had but ruffled the surface of his heart, while I lay buried in its inmost recesses.

Hark! As I write, the dear step is coming toward me, the clear voice rings out my name, the loved music sinks down into my soul, and I throw aside my pen to greet my husband.

E. J. M.

SCIENCE.

No fewer than 158 ships are now lying in the Mersey waiting for graving dock accommodation.

NEW CURE FOR DEAFNESS, AND DISORDERS OF THE RESPIRATORY ORGANS.—A man in France has been cured of deafness by repeated visits to a chamber filled with air compressed to two atmospheres and a half. Similar cases had occurred before, and the subject is at last attracting much attention among the French as it should among English physicians. Another account says that by this treatment catarrh, asthma, and other complaints of the respiratory organs may be removed; in croup, the compressed air will flatten down the adventitious membranes; and in disorders arising from weakness, compressed air will arterialize the blood, and increase the vital power of the patient.

CASTING OF A MONSTER GUN.

A TWENTY-INCH Rodman gun, the largest piece of ordnance in the world, was successfully cast on the 11th of February, at the Fort Pitt Works, Pittsburgh. The arrangements for this extraordinary casting were on the most ample scale.

The furnaces are three in number. Two of them are calculated to reduce 25 tons of metal each, and the third, 40 tons at a single heat. They are so arranged as to pour the metal into a reservoir with the shortest length of "runners" possible.

The flask, in which the gun was cast, is a massive piece of cast-iron. It is of octagonal shape, formed of iron of an inch and a half in thickness, and thickly studded with supporting ribs of six by four inches. It was cast in several sections, fitted together into halves, the opposite sides being left open for the filling of the mould.

The entire casting weighs about twenty tons, and the mould, with sand and brackets, probably about forty. The construction of the patterns alone of the flask and gun occupied many weeks.

The core-barrel, used in the manufacture of all guns of Rodman's patent, is a long fluted cylinder of iron, semicircular at one end and closed at the other by a cap, through which a pipe enters, and passes nearly to the bottom of the cylinder.

Through this pipe a stream of water is conducted to the bottom of the barrel during the process of casting, and, rising around it to within a few inches of the top, is carried off by a waste-pipe. This barrel is rather smaller in diameter than the rough bore of the gun, and is prepared for the casting by wrapping it with a layer of hard cord, which is then coated with a peculiar refractory composition.

This coating of the barrel "vents" the metal—that is, affords an exit to the gases generated during the casting, which pass along the flutings of the barrel and burn fiercely at the top; the barrel when coated is also subjected to the drying-oven, before being lifted into the mould.

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extreme delicacy; but with constant practice, the employés in the works have become so expert as to insure almost perfect accuracy. The barrel is supported at the upper end by a massive tripod lifting its head some 2 ft. above the upper edge of the flask, and enabling the workmen to observe the rise of metal in the mould.

During the operation of casting a constant stream of water pours through the barrel, keeping down its temperature, and cooling the gun from the interior.

The arrangements for the casting were all completed on the 10th ult. The three furnaces were charged, one with 39 tons, and each of the others with 23½ tons of metal. One of the smaller furnaces in the old foundry was also charged with 12 tons of metal as a reserve, in case of accident. From each of the four furnaces lines of open troughs of cast-iron, known as "runners," led to the "pool" or reservoir beside the pit, from which two shorter lines connected with the mould. In moulding, two long cylindrical bars are laid beside the pattern, forming when the flask is closed, a circular opening on each side of the mould, leading to the bottom, and connected with the mould by openings all the way to the top, breaking the fall of the heavy flood of metal before reaching the gun bottom. With each of these openings or "gates" is connected one of the runners from the pool. The furnaces were fired at an early hour on the morning of the 11th ult., and everything working most admirably, the charges were reduced before twelve o'clock.

Twenty minutes past twelve the furnaces were tapped, and three fiery streams of metal poured into the pool, and thence into the mould. The reduction of the metal had been so successfully performed that no waste was perceptible in the character of the iron flowing from the several furnaces. The filling of the mould proceeded with the same success, and at a quarter to one, twenty-five minutes after the furnaces were tapped, the mould was filled, and they were stopped off, 170,000 lbs. of metal having in the meantime passed through the pool,—nearly 7,000 lbs. per minute. The operation passed off very successfully, no difficulty arising at any stage, notwithstanding the immense weight of iron used.

The gun will be reduced in the iron lathe from a rough weight of 170,000 lbs. to a finished weight, calculated, of 115,000 lbs. The whole length from breech to muzzle will be 243½ inches; length of bore 210 inches. The maximum diameter will be 64 inches, minimum, 34 inches. The solid round 20-inch shot will weigh 1,000 lbs., and the shell about 700 lbs. The charge of powder will vary according to circumstances from 65 to 89 lbs. Some two weeks must elapse before the gun will be lifted from the pit, and many weeks before it will leave the lathe in a partially finished condition, to be chipped, filed, and fitted ready for mounting.

The lathe, in which the gun is to be turned, is one of the most massive ever constructed. For its foundation, an excavation about 65 feet in length, 20 in width, and 13 in depth, was filled for 3 ft. in depth by a thoroughly grouted mass of stone work. Upon this foundation were secured an immense bed-plate, and the basis of 30 cast-iron columns, arranged in pairs, and supporting in turn the caps upon which the "shears" of the lathe rest. These columns are 8 ft. high and 10 inches in diameter, and the "shears" cast in two pieces, are 18 inches high, about 12 inches face, and 65 ft. long. They were placed about 5 ft. apart, coupled by caps, and strung together by the shears. As soon as the immense castings were fitted and securely bolted to their places, the interior of the pit was solidly built up with brick laid in cement, forming a rigid mass from top to bottom, with a longitudinal pit extending from end to end. Nothing less than this rigid foundation could be used in the heavy work for which the lathe is designed. Upon the shears rest the ordinary tool slides, massive pieces of cast-iron. The lathe will be driven by a pair of 6 in. cylinders, 12 feet stroke, and working at right angles. The driving wheel and face-plate is 9 ft. in diameter, and so geared as to exert an enormous power. The weight of metal in the principal pieces composing the lathe is 209,885 lbs.

PROPOSED PATENT OFFICE BILL.—The council of the Inventors' Institute, in a printed circular, opposed this bill, for the following and other reasons:—That the erection of a suitable Patent Office is a matter affecting national interests, and should be carried into effect by Government only. The Government has ample resources available for doing this out of the surplus income of the present Patent Office, which surplus income now amounts to nearly £500,000. The council are strongly of opinion that in the interests of the inventors, as well as in the interests of the public, it would be most undesirable that the erection of a new Patent Office should in any way be under the management, direction, or control of any private commercial body. That, pending the report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the working of

the laws relating to patents for invention, it is undesirable that any determination as to the site for a Patent Office should be arrived at. There are several other sites which would be more eligible and far less expensive than the one proposed. So soon as it is decided which of the Metropolitan Lines of Railway now before Parliament are to be sanctioned, other desirable sites equally accessible from all parts of the metropolis, will be found. At the present Patent Office there are a number of rooms unappropriated, which may readily be made available for temporary purposes, and until after the Commissioners' report has been issued.

TELEGRAPHIC PROGRESS.

THE Great Eastern, it is said, has been chartered to carry the Atlantic cable for its submersion next summer.

The Submarine Telegraph Company's half-yearly report states that the receipts for the past half-year, derived from 185,380 messages amounted to £25,184 1s. 2½d.; for the half-year ending 30th June, 1863, from 160,404 messages, to £22,144 2s. 8½d.; and for the half-year ending 31st December, 1862, from 172,881 messages, to £23,427 5s. 6½d. A dividend, at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum, was declared, although the capital has been largely increased by the issue of new stock. The sum of £2,518 8s. 2d., being 10 per cent. on the receipts, was also added to the reserve fund, which now amounts to £6,441 7s. The salaries of the directors were increased from £500 to £1,000.

The numerous submarine telegraph cables now at work in Europe are, in the aggregate, upwards of 5,600 miles long. These cables range from 4 miles to 1,500 miles each in length, and they are sunk in water varying from 90 to 9,400 ft. in depth.

At the Royal United Service Institution recently, a lecture was delivered by Lieutenant A. H. Gilmore, R.N., on "The Application of Electric Telegraphy to the Steering and General Management of a Man-of-war." Lieutenant Gilmore's naval telegraph has, it is said, been fitted successfully on her Majesty's yacht the Victoria and Albert, on the Orlando, and on four other ships.

FIRING CANNON UNDER WATER.—I beg leave to forward for insertion a short history of some experiments made in the spring of 1862, in firing shots under water, from a gun, the muzzle of which was 5 feet, more or less, under water. The recoil appeared to be entirely controllable; and in experimenting with the same gun after the tide had left it dry, it was said by Mr. Woodbury that, with the same charge, the recoil was actually greater than in the experiments where the gun was fired below the surface. As I was not present, and had no one acting for me to note the result, I cannot vouch for this; but I have no reason to doubt the fact. The only solution I can give is that a gun fired above water displaces instantly a column of air from the bore of the gun, and the atmospheric pressure added to the force of the explosion adds also to the recoil by suddenly filling the vacuum; whereas, when a gun is fired under water, the return of the water to the bore is not so sudden as that of atmospheric pressure, or air, and therefore there is less recoil. I do not make this suggestion as an expert in hydrostatics or philosophy; but if, the fact be a fact, how can you account for less recoil? On the other hand, why should there be more recoil to a gun fired under water?—R. B. FORBES.

INSTANTANEOUS PHOTOGRAPHS.

THE grand problem in photographic portraiture for the past twenty years has been, how to make a photograph with the shortest exposure of the model.

The attempts at solution are in two different directions—viz., the concentration of light, and the employment of more sensitive chemicals. The early photographers were wonderfully successful, by virtue of the working in the open air, chalking of faces, using of reflectors, camera lenses and mirrors of large aperture, screens of blue glass, and troughs of the ammonia sulphate of copper, &c.; and all this with the slow process which Daguerre gave to the world.

The success was so great that photography would still be a practical art, even had there been no improvement in the chemical department. But the capital discovery of the quickening action of bromine was made, and we were at first so well content with our comparatively quick working that we abandoned our special appliances for the concentration of light. There were then no very notable improvements in either direction for ten years.

The Daguerreotype was substantially perfected in 1841. In 1851, Archer gave us the collodion process, and it remains still, in respect of sensitiveness, but little better than when we received it. We feel vexed that we have so little to show for the last ten years; if all sympathise with us, and a great many shoulders are put to the wheel, something may be done speedily.

Surely we can improve our practice with regard to lighting. Let it well be appreciated that the chemical process remaining the same, the time of exposure is rigidly proportioned to the amount of light. If it now requires ten seconds of exposure for a negative, and a babe can remain still but five seconds, you have only to get twice as much light and your negative is made in five seconds.

All artists, of course, understand that by removing the stops from the lenses, the light is proportionately increased, but at the great expense of definition; this plan should not be resorted to, therefore, except when other expedients are unavailable. Increase the light falling on the model, should be the maxim.

In direct sunlight, portraits are made almost instantaneously: this is a capital fact, but how to make it serviceable is the question. If the direct sunlight be filtered through a pure blue medium, you eliminate everything which is obnoxious, while the unadulterated actinic force is left to do its work. Light is wanted, the more the better; then give it a chance to enter. Skylights facing the north, to avoid the beaming face of our best friend, are unkind and absurd.

These thoughts are reasonable, and they are not an untried theory. Mr. Bogardus has lately constructed a camera room, which we propose to the profession as a model, where the correctness of the system of direct sunlighting is demonstrated; the light looks towards the south, the sitter in a mild twilight is face to face with the sun; Mr. Bogardus often gets the very best negatives in a fraction of a second.

MAIZE PAPER.—Over and above the abundant use which is now made of maize as an article of food, a new market is likely to be opened for this product through the inventions of manufacturing paper and cloth out of the fibre. The Austrians are the people to whom we are indebted for this advance in science and industrial art; they have now brought the manufacture of maize paper to such perfection that nothing remains to be desired more, and although as yet they have been unsuccessful in producing a fine cloth, nothing but time is required to render that effort also perfect. Through the kindness of Mr. William Short, we are indebted for specimens of the papers produced from the fibre of maize in the Vienna manufactory. The qualities vary from coarse, strong wrapping paper to the smoothest and finest writing paper. The paper glazes beautifully, but the most remarkable feature of it is its wonderful transparency. Some even moderately thick specimens are so transparent that they more than match our English prepared tracing-paper, the most delicate lines being visible through it. The thicker sort equals our thick hot-pressed paper. The price of the maize paper is from a penny to two-pence a quire. We understand that maize paper is about to be manufactured in England. In the process there is no secret, nor is there anything different in principle from the manufacture of ordinary rag paper. New machinery would, however, be required by any firm that should take up the process commercially.

A DANISH IRONCLAD UNDER FIRE.

The subjoined letter has been received from an officer who was on board the Danish cupola ship, the Rolf Krake, during the engagement with the Prussian batteries at Egernsund.

The Rolf Krake was built by Napier, of Glasgow. She is plated with four and a half inch iron, and has two turrets, but they carry only four 68-pounders. She is of 1,200 tons, and draws but sixteen feet of water. This is the first turret ship that has been under fire on this side of the Atlantic.

The correspondent writes: "Nine days ago (Feb. 10) we left the roads at Copenhagen, and sailed, in concert with the Bagmar, to Sonderborg. Our crew only came on board the morning of our departure. The men were unpractised, and had rarely been under fire. On the evening of the 17th we heard that we were next morning to see what was to be done against a bridge which the enemy had thrown across at Egernsund, shortening the route to Broagerland and the position at Doppel. At seven a.m., on the 18th, we left Sonderborg, and steered for Flensburg Bay.

"The Rolf Krake has two towers, each carrying two heavy guns. Apertures at the top of the tower admit light and air; mechanical arrangements allow of the ship being lowered until her deck is only a few inches above the surface. We passed Holnaes without replying to the fire of the battery stationed there, and took up the position which had been designated. Here we anchored, with our broadside towards two fixed batteries and one movable field-battery, which opened upon us a murderous fire with round shot, conical shell, and shrapnel. A tongue of land prevented our seeing the bridge we had been ordered to destroy. The enemy fired very well. His fixed batteries were masked, and it is therefore impossible to say how much damage we did him; but I sent a couple of shells at a rifled gun that rained conical shot

upon us from the heights, and when sheering off bombarded a mill and a house. We returned to Sonderborg, after being engaged an hour and a half.

"The Rolf Krake stood the trial well. She was hulled sixty-six times, each shot being of itself sufficient to sink a wooden ship. The towers were hit several times; sixteen shots went through the funnel, one through the steam-pipe, two through the foremast, one through the mainmast, two through the mizen, and from sixty to seventy through the bulwarks, small boats, sails, and rigging. The deck is torn up in many places, the tackle much cut, the three boats riddled, every vulnerable point was hit, and I should like to have seen any part of the deck where a man could have been stationed without certainty of death. We calculated that about 5,000 lb. of iron were expended upon us, and you may suppose that we contributed our share.

"The noise was deafening, produced as much by our own fire as the missiles of the enemy, whose shells flew about in all directions. One, which burst directly over the tower in which I was stationed, sent in a shower of pieces, which set fire to two mattresses, damaged my frontispiece, grazed my leg, smashed my telescope, and penetrated a coat lying by my side in half-a-dozen places. I am still deaf of one ear from the din, otherwise not much hurt. One man in each tower was also slightly wounded, and, curiously enough, each in the left cheek."

FACETIA.

WHY should our iron-clad vessels be considered a grievance?—Because they are *hard-ships*.

WHY is an inexperienced tea-dealer like a person who sells vegetables?—Because he's a *green-grocer*.

A LOVER OF BIRDS.

"Oh, I am so glad you like birds. What kind do you most admire?" said a young wife to her husband.

"Ahem! Well, I think a good turkey, with plenty of dressing," said the husband, "is about as nice as any."

WHAT IS A COWARD?—"Jimmy, what is the meaning of a shepherd?" "A man who watches sheep." "Then a man who watches cows must be a coward, of course," said Samuel with a big grin.

A SEAL ON THE GODWIN SANDS.—The *Kent Herald* says that the Deal boatmen have seen a large seal on the Godwin Sands several times during the last month. No doubt it belongs to the watch of some ancient mariner gone to his account on the sands.

PRECISION.

Lawyers are sometimes very particular. The other day one of these learned and amiable gentlemen was waited on by a young man who wished his advice, and began by saying:

"My father died and made a will—"

"Is it possible? I never heard of such a thing," answered the lawyer.

"I thought it happened every day," said the young man; "but if there is to be any difficulty about it I had better give you a fee to attend to the business."

The fee was given, and then the lawyer observed:

"Oh, think I know what you mean. You meant that your father made a will and died."

"Yes, yes; that must be it."

GOOD FEEDING.—A youngster on coming home from his first term at a boarding-school, and on being asked what he had been fed on, replied, "Multiplication tables hashed, and stewed subtraction."

A LARGE BALL.

A Yankee was narrating some of the "sights" he had seen, to a crowd of astonished Germans, and among the rest he said:

"Why, when I was in Mexico under Scott I saw a ball larger than this house."

This was too much for the credulity of the Germans, and one of them said,—

"Dunder und blitzen! Vere would dey got de cannon to fire it off?"

"Dunno," replied the imperturbable Yankee, "but I saw it."

"Wat kind ball was it?"

"Oh, a ball given by the general in Mexico to celebrate the victory."

SUCCESS TO FORGERY.—The proprietor of a forge, not remarkable for correctness of language, but who, by honest industry, had realised a comfortable independence, being called upon at a social meeting for a toast, gave—"Success to forgery."

A SAFE ORDER.—A Californian gold-digger having become rich, desired a friend to procure for him a fit library of books. The friend obeyed, and received from his correspondent a letter of thanks thus worded: "I am obliged to you for the pains of your selection.

In my humble opinion 'tis done with judgment, and is every way satisfactory to me. Among the books you sent me I particularly admire a grand religious poem about Paradise, by a Mr. Milton, and a set of plays (quite delightful) by a Mr. Shakespeare. If these gentlemen should write and publish anything more, be sure and send me their new works."

"TALL" TALK.—A Kentuckian was asked what he considered the boundaries of the United States. "The boundaries of our country, sir?" he replied. "Why, sir, on the north we are bounded by the aurora borealis, on the east we are bounded by the rising sun, on the south we are bounded by the procession of the equinoxes, and on the west by the Day of Judgment."

THE CAT AND THE SPARROW.—A cat caught a sparrow, and was about to devour it, but the sparrow said—"No gentleman eats till he washes his face." The cat, struck with this remark, set the sparrow down, and began to wash his face with his paw, but the sparrow flew away. This vexed puss extremely, and he said, "As long as I live I will eat first and wash my face afterwards," which all cats do, even to this day.

EMBARGO.

Embargo? Yes! embargo,
Embargo of all sorts.
The Yankee lay embargoes
On down-trod Southern ports;
The French embargo people's lips,
The Pope embargo brains,
The Danes embargo German ships,
Germans embargo Danes'
And you, John Bull—for shame, old Jack!—
With shilly-shallying shams,
Act like a thorough maniac,
And embargo little rams.
In this strange seizure you are wrong—
Unwise to cry "I'll nab you!"—
You've read "embargo" backwards, John,
And made it out "O grab me."

GEOGRAPHICAL.—What country of Europe should have the largest capital? Ireland: because its capital is always Dublin (doubling).—*Punch*.

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.—The M.P. who "entered uninvited" on a discussion, has been taken up for "trespassing" on the time of the House. The hon. gentleman who "flung himself" into the debate, was caught floundering in the middle of a sentence, and rescued with difficulty. He is to be tried for attempted suicide.—*Punch*.

NEWS FROM BRAZIL.

By the latest Brazil and River Plate Mails (March 5), we have received the following melancholy musical intelligence:—

"Common Bones Dull."

We should like to know how the tambourine is? and will our interested readers unite in kind inquiries after the general efficiency of the banjo and accordion. Why does not the Uncommon Bones from the genuine Christy's Minstrels emigrate, and enliven the Brazilians. If the "Common Bones" is dull, he'd better leave, as he won't have much chance of making a lively-hood.—*Punch*.

TO HORTICULTURISTS.—The Shakespearian Tercentenary Festival, at Stratford, will, this year, be the Great Flower Show of the season.—*Punch*.

TO AGRICULTURISTS.—In consequence of 1864 being leap-year, we may be sure it will go off with a good spring.—*Punch*.

ART PATRONAGE.—Picture Dealer: "Hundred Guineas! Nonsense, 50 you mean, an' as to Guineas, I always call 'em Pounds; say the word—here's my Bill at six months!"—*Punch*.

QUITE SUPERFLUOUS.—"What the Government required," said the Marquis of Hartington, in moving the Army Estimates, "was a perfect mode of rising." Haven't they got the Income-Tax?—*Punch*.

TRULY GRATIFYING.—Mr. Smith, who has lately subscribed five shillings to the National Shakespearian Fund, wishes his name to appear in print, and here it is.—*Punch*.

A REAL RUFFIAN.

Or all the sensation outrages of the day, perhaps this kind of thing is the most outrageous:—

"The up-mail train on the North Devon Railway, on Monday night, had a narrow escape. On arriving about a quarter of a mile beyond Yeoford, the driver of the engine saw an obstruction on the line, into which, before speed could be reduced, the train ran. There were one or two severe jolts, but the train passed safely, and was immediately pulled up. The obstruction was found to have been caused by a wooden gate, which had been unhung and placed across the rails, and upon it a heap of large stones had been piled. There was another gate close by across the line."

It turned out that a labourer, named George Nott, had laid these obstructions, and been seized. He admitted his guilt, and confessed his sorrow. We are happy to say that he is committed for trial; and, as the Insane Prisoners' bill will have passed before he gets into the dock, no Dr. Crankey Cracker will be able to save him by showing that his grandmother was a little mad, and his maternal uncle was half an idiot. The hideous wickedness of such a crime demands a severer punishment than even a good deal of pain; or else if Mr. Nott were well flogged at each station on the line, and back again, the agricultural mind might receive a desirable impression touching the toleration of society for such miscreants.—*Punch*.

METROPOLITAN RAILWAY.—The London Butchers' Company (Limited) are going into the committee-rooms for powers to open a line, specially for cattle trains, from the west to the east-end markets. The name proposed is The Line of Mutton.—*Punch*.

ONE man is as good as another, if not better. One woman is as bad as another, if not worse.—*Mr. Merryman*.

HINTS TO THOSE WHO RIDE IN OMNIBUSES.

Never, on any account, assist any person, particularly if such person be infirm or a female, in passing in or out.

Scrupulously avoid making room for a new-comer, although you may occupy twice as much of the seat as you have any right to.

Be particular in placing your wet umbrella as close against your neighbour as possible.

Always stretch out your legs so that your feet may be an annoyance to your opposite fellow-passenger.

If you carry a stick, do not fail to stand it between your knees, and, resting both hands thereon, thrust your elbows out, to the inconvenience of those persons who may be fortunate enough to be sitting near you.

Never ride outside, not even on a beautiful warm day, to oblige a lady, unless she be young and pretty.—*Mr. Merryman*.

QUERY.—What are the points of resemblance between clergymen and waiters?—(Do you give it up?)—Both wear white ties and take orders.—*Mr. Merryman*.

WHY is it impossible that the Queen should become bold while the Prince of Wales has a son?—Because, while the Prince of Wales has a child, her Majesty's heir must always be a (p)parent.—*Mr. Merryman*.

BLONDIN OUTDONE.—A lady at Cowes has succeeded in running up a milk bill; and so confident is she of the fact, that her hands cannot be made to give up the balance.—*Mr. Merryman*.

WE are sorry to learn that ill-health compels Sir Rowland Hill to resign the secretaryship of the General Post-office. It will be difficult to find an Oliver to replace such a Rowland.—*Mr. Merryman*.

WHY are Barclay and Perkins and the manager of the Surrey theatre alike?—Because they both depend upon their *brew*, particularly at Christmas.—*Mr. Merryman*.

HINTS TO VOCALISTS.

Always remember that the voice can only be raised by proper cultivation, but it should never be forced.

Always take great pains to reflect three months' credit on your instructor.

Never sing after meals if you wish to have a full voice.

If your voice be tenor eleven, do not attempt anything bass, for you will be sure to be found out.

Never pitch your voice too high, or too far, for you might lose it altogether.

Never strain your voice, for it is a very difficult thing to bind up.

If you break your voice, have your top teeth extracted immediately, and procure a falsetto.

If your voice be a genuine Windsor soprano, its registered letter may be posted from C below zero to C above it, if you can.

The majority of female voices are mezzo-soprano, which accounts for their being met so often.

The ordinary compass-box of a mezzo-often-soprano voice is from the black C below the equator to G-rusalem about it.—*Mr. Merryman*.

EXPECTED VISIT OF THE RUSSIAN HEIR-APPARENT.—*La France* says that the Grand Duke, the heir-apparent to the Russian throne, is coming to London and Paris this spring, and that he will be accompanied by Count Sergius Stroganoff and Colonel Richter, of the Imperial Guards. He is expected to leave St. Petersburg about April 15th.

THE CRAWLEY COURT-MARTIAL.—The total of the expenses occasioned by the court-martial on Lieutenant-Colonel Crawley, to be defrayed from the Imperial revenue, is shown by a return to Parliament, just issued, to be £18,378 17s. 6d. The following are the items which make up that amount:—Cost of

transport £2,234.
in England £1,000.
witnesses £1,000.
port back £1,000.
Deputy Messengers £1,000.
Sons for fitting up £17 16s.

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transport for witnesses &c., from India to England, £5,234 10s.; travelling expenses for witnesses, &c., in England, £456 4s. 7d.; pay and allowances of witnesses, &c., £9,288 1s. 7d.; estimated cost of transport back to India, £2,901 11s. 10d.; expenses of Deputy Judge-Advocate-General, and of certain witnesses, cabs, &c., £127 17s. 3d.; Messrs Gurney and Sons for transcript of evidence, &c., £212 17s. 3d.; fitting up club at Aldershot, fuel, light, and repairs of furniture, £64 18s. 8d.; incidental expenses, £17 16s. 4d.

THE AMERICAN NAVY.—The Brooklyn and several other United States ships of war are now ready for sea at New York, but cannot procure crews. Sailors will not enter the navy when they can obtain a bounty of 700 dollars for enlisting in the army, and 30 dollars a month in the mercantile marine, while the naval pay is only 18 dollars a month for able seamen.

ESCAPE OF FEDERAL OFFICERS.—It was hardly to be comprehended how it was that the Federal soldiers and officers escaped from Confederate prisons in such large numbers as reported, but the recent accounts assure us that the diplomatic means of getting rid of them has been adopted by the Confederates of giving their prisoners a chance which they were not slow to avail themselves of.

THE ABERDEEN STATUE OF HER MAJESTY.—The Town Council of Aberdeen have voted the sum of 100 guineas as a contribution to the statue of her Majesty the Queen, proposed to be erected in that city. Mr. Alexander Brodie, brother of Mr. Brodie, sculptor, Edinburgh, has been appointed the artist; and about £600 have been subscribed. The whole cost, the material being Sicilian marble, will be about £1,000.

STATISTICS.

THE DANISH ARMY.—A Hanover letter says:—“The damage which the Danish navy may inflict on Austrian commerce is very considerable. The annual exports and imports of Trieste amount to 186 millions of Austrian florins (367,200,000 fr.); 15,000 vessels annually arrive at or leave the Austrian ports. The Austrian mercantile navy comprises 10,000 vessels, manned by 35,000 men. The Prussian merchant vessels amount to 1,800, manned by 12,000 men. Hamburg owns 500 vessels, and its yearly imports and exports reach the value of 336,000 marks banco (621,600,000 fr.), and 5,000 vessels arrive at or leave the port. Bremen has 300 vessels; its trade amounts to 150,000,000 thalers (530,800,000 fr.). Lubeck imports and exports to the value of 20,000,000 marks (37,000,000 fr.); it has 60 vessels, and the annual movement is 1,500. The merchant vessels of Hanover, Oldenburg, and the two Mecklenburgs form a total of about 2,000.”

The Board of Trade returns for January have been issued. The remarkable expansion of the export trade continues. The total shipments of British and Irish produce and manufactures for the month were valued at £10,418,586, being larger by £2,358,481, or 29 per cent, than in January last year, and larger by £1,974,581, or 23 per cent, than in January, 1862. The increase in cotton yarn and goods continues to form a remarkable feature. The month's exports of cotton piece-goods are stated at £2,816,778, against £1,622,622 in 1863, and £2,494,072 in 1862. The increase in worsted stuffs is likewise very large, and generally it may be said that the activity extends through nearly all the principal articles of exports. The present returns give the value of the principal imports for the whole year 1863, which was £203,826,363, against £184,787,507 in 1862, and £179,284,161 in 1861. The increased payments to the foreigners thus necessitated help to explain the rise in the value of money which took place in the latter half of the past year.

THE NEW “TICKET OF LEAVE.”

The Penal Servitude Bill now passing through Parliament gives the new form proposed for orders of licence. The old form gave licence to the convict to be at large in the United Kingdom for the remainder of his sentence, unless it should please her Majesty sooner to revoke the licence: the new form adds, “or unless the said A shall before the expiration of the said term be convicted of some indictable offence, in which case this licence will be immediately forfeited by law.” It also adds that “upon the breach of any of the conditions endorsed on the licence it will be liable to be revoked, whether such breach is followed by a conviction or not.”

The conditions endorsed are to be these four:—“1. The holder shall preserve his licence, and produce it when called upon to do so by a magistrate or police officer;” this condition is new. “2. He shall abstain from any violation of the law. 3. He shall not

habitually associate with notoriously bad characters, such as reputed thieves and prostitutes. 4. He shall not lead an idle and dissolute life, without visible means of obtaining an honest livelihood.” These three conditions are substantially the same as on the old licence, except (if it be an exception) that the first of them these ran—“This licence is liable to be revoked in case of misconduct.”

Lastly, the old licence adds that if revoked, the convict may have to undergo “the whole remaining portion of his original sentence;” the corresponding clause in the proposed new licence is, that if it is forfeited or revoked “in consequence of a conviction for any offence,” the convict will be liable to undergo the term of penal servitude which was unexpired when the licence was granted.

By a clause in the bill, a breach of the conditions by an act not of itself punishable, either upon indictment or summary conviction, is to be punishable summarily with three months' imprisonment with or without hard labour; and by another clause, where the licence shall be either forfeited by a conviction for an indictable offence, or revoked in pursuance of summary conviction under this or any other Act of Parliament, the convict is to undergo the term of penal servitude which was unexpired when the licence was granted, and this in addition to his new sentence.

HELP EACH OTHER.

I NEVER knew a kindness yet,
But as time's seasons ran,
Some seed of hope from it was set
That promised good for man:
I never knew a feeling heart,
In needful cases shown,
But it a spirit could impart
Congenial to its own!

For kindness is power divine,
An essence not of earth;
It wreathes the everlasting shrine
Where holiest things have birth:
It hath a life beyond to-day;
And, when this life is o'er,
'Twill meet us smiling on our way,
And good for good restore!
I never knew a generous hand
Grow poorer for such deed;
A power we all can understand
Still bids the hand succeed.
Whate'er a noble act may cost,
Whate'er the service given,
A kindness done is never lost;
Neither on earth nor heaven!

C. S.

GEMS.

SPEAK of people's virtues, conceal their infirmities; if you can say no good, speak no ill of them.

JUDGE thyself with a judgment of sincerity, and thou wilt judge others with a judgment of charity.

The praises of others may be of use, in teaching us not what we are, but what we ought to be.

They who presume most in prosperity, are soonest subject to despair in adversity.

We all need resistance to our errors on every side. Woe unto us when all men speak well of us; and woe unto us when all men shall give way to us.

A FEMALE heart is often like marble; the cunning stonecutter strikes a thousand blows without the Parian block showing the line of a crack; but all at once it breaks asunder into the very form the cunning stonecutter has so long been hammering at.

We have simply the choice either always or never to fear; for our life-test stands over a loaded mine, and, round about, the hours aim at us naked weapons. Only one in a thousand hits, but, in any case, better fall standing than bending like a coward.

The manner in which a youth encounters his first trouble gives often a character to his life; for it decides whether, besides his property, fortune shall have his spirit at her disposal, to exalt, depress, and play with, at caprice.

TALENT AND CLEVERNESS.—Genius rushes like a whirlwind; talent marches like a cavalcade of heavy men and heavy horses; cleverness skims like a swallow in the summer evening, with a sharp, shrill note and a sudden turning. The man of genius dwells with men and nature; the man of talent in his study; but the clever man dances here, there and everywhere, like a butterfly in a hurricane, striking everything and enjoying nothing, but too light to be dashed to pieces. The man of talent will attack theories, the clever man will assail the individual, and slander private character. The man of genius despises both; he needs none, he fears none, he lives in himself, shrouded in the consciousness of his own strength;

he interferes with none, and walks forth an example that eagles fly alone. It is true, that should a poisonous worm cross his path he may tread it under his foot; should a cur snarl at him he may chastise him; but he will not, cannot attack the privacy of another.

AN idle man is a kind of monster in the creation; all nature is busy about him. How wretched it is to hear people complain that the day hangs heavy upon them, that they do not know what to do with themselves! How monstrous are such expressions among people who can apply themselves to the duties of religion and meditation, to the reading of useful books; who may exercise themselves in the pursuits of knowledge and virtue, and every hour of their lives make themselves wiser and better than they were before.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE ROYAL NURSE.—Miss Waters, daughter of Mr. Joseph Waters, of Sand, Somersetshire, has been appointed head nurse to the young prince.

ISLINGTON HORSE SHOW.—A horse show, on a grand scale, will take place in the Agricultural Hall, Islington, during the first week in July.

It has been said that 20,000 guns have been ordered in France by the Sultan. The exact number is 80,000.

PIETRO AND THE EMPEROR.—Pietro is said to have sent papers of the utmost importance to the emperor just prior to his death. His Majesty called to thank him, but found him in his last moments.

VICISSITUDES OF FORTUNE.—The descendant of a prince of the ancient Armorique, Count de Varroc, has just died at the poor-house in Paris—an item more for Burke's “Vicissitudes.”

LUCK.—Luck always follows in the path that luck has been before. The ambassador of Russia to Spain (Prince Wolowski), who little needs it, has just gained a prize of £6,000 in the Spanish lottery.

EXTRAORDINARY LONGEVITY.—There recently died at Bellevue, Wisconsin, United States, Charlotte Berca, at the extraordinary age of 125. She had gone through many of the early Indian wars, and in one desperate struggle had both her ears cut off.

TOBACCO IMPORTS AT LIVERPOOL.—It transpired, in a case before the Liverpool bench recently, that the value of the tobacco in the Queen's warehouse of that port was estimated at £5,000,000. One of the servants of the Customs was accused of “removing” 4 lb. of tobacco from the warehouse, and a fine of £100 was laid upon him.

BLONDIN AND THE POPE.—The Pope has forbidden the appearance of Blondin at Rome! It seems an assembly of some £12,000 or 15,000 persons would be dangerous to the papal sway. The King of Italy, on the other hand, is anxious to see Blondin, whom he calls a “gallant artist.” How is this to end?

CONFEDERATE VESSELS AT NANTES.—The two vessels building at Nantes, supposed to be for the Confederates, are nearly ready for launching; and it is said that officers having commissions are in Paris, ready to take command of them unless detained by the French Government.

A VENERABLE MONARCH.—Disquieting rumours respecting the King of Wurtemburg are again in circulation. His Majesty is obliged to pass the greater part of the night seated in an arm-chair, and suffers much from weakness. The venerable monarch is 82 years of age.

ABERLIN PIANOFORTE MANUFACTORY.—Herr Bösendorff, of Berlin, has just celebrated a 5,000th birthday—that is, the birth of the 5,000th pianoforte he has constructed since he has been in business. His renown is great, and he is heard in every part of Germany—that is, the voice of his pianos speak of him.

RAILWAY KING.—Mr. Thomas Brassey, the railway contractor, is said to have entered into contracts with the Russian Government, amounting to £24,000,000 sterling, to construct railways from St. Petersburg to Odessa, and from Odessa to Sebastopol in the Crimea. The transactions of Mr. Brassey, since 1834, in railway contracts, have amounted to not less than the vast sum of £100,000,000 sterling.

THE FRENCH MARINE.—It is confidently stated that considerable exertions are now making in the French Dockyards, by order of the Minister of Marine, to push on as rapidly as possible the works on the unfinished iron-plated frigates. If these frigates are not required for actual service they will be attached to Admiral Penaud's experimental squadron, which is expected to proceed on a cruise before the end of this month. The Provence and Hermione are expected to be ready by that time; the Savoie, Revauche, and Elandre are also being expedited, having a number of men engaged upon them.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

G. R.—Red is one of the primary colours.

C. A.—The prismatic colours are nothing more than such as are produced by decomposing light by a prism.

R. O. P.—*A chargé d'Affaires* is the third or lowest class of foreign ministers, according to the regulations adopted at the Congress of Vienna.

S. O.—Charcoal obtained by distilling beech-wood, log-wood, willow and other woods which are free from resin, is called *cylinder charcoal*. The charcoal used in the manufacture of gunpowder is now always so prepared.

WOLF.—Three copies of THE LONDON READER will go through the post with two stamps.

M. F.—There is, we believe, no benefit society of the kind in existence. You stipulate for incompatible conditions.

S. B. (age twenty-four), would be most happy to correspond with a young lady perfectly domesticated, and having a good temper and loving heart.

EMMA G. should know that everything is possible in love. There is nothing at all uncommon in a man loving a woman older than himself.

DOUBTFUL ROSEBUD need not be at all doubtful as to her personal attractions. As a "rosebud" of sixteen, we should pronounce her charming.

D. C. M. would like to meet with an industrious husband. She is twenty-four, fair, below the medium height, rather plain-looking, is respectably connected, and has good prospects. An Irishman of good business habits preferred, and *carter-de-visite* to be exchanged.

BLACK PRINCE.—Certainly not; if the whole amount of a bill of acceptance be paid, the holder can claim nothing further.

L. M.—The first wood engravings in Europe of which anything is known with certainty were executed in 1285 by a brother and sister of a noble family of the name of Cimicis. They represent the actions of Alexander; and though doubts of their authenticity are expressed by Heinecken, other writers think differently.

MATILDA.—The best application for freckles is a dilute spirituous lotion, one part of brandy to eight of water, with a few drops of muriatic acid, so as to render it just perceptibly sour.

H. G.—Like all other nations, the Germans owe their music to the Italians. They received the Gregorian chant from Italy; and though they may not have equalled their masters in vocal melody, they have greatly surpassed them in instrumental music. It is certain that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the music of Germany was greatly inferior to that of Italy.

PHOEBE.—To improve her complexion and obtain a colour, can do nothing better than take plenty of exercise, and pay attention to diet. We have no knowledge of such a composition as is desired.

A. CONSTANT READER.—You can see your husband for a maintenance for yourself and child. What the amount would be which the law would compel him to allow you we cannot undertake to say. It would be regulated by his means and the circumstances of the case.

CHAR. S., who is twenty-two years of age, height 5 ft. 11 in., considered to be good-looking, having an income of £100 per annum, with good prospects, desires to correspond with any one of our fair readers who may think fit to entertain ideas of matrimony under such conditions.

HANK desires to find a young and slightly-accomplished lady who would endear to make a home happy. Is twenty years of age, tall, and rather dark; will have a comfortable income of £300 per annum on the death of an aged relative, and is in possession of £150 now.

OTHELLO and CASSIUS will be happy to correspond with two young ladies who have not yet disposed of their affections. "Othello" is a surgical student, nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, hair between colours, and respectably connected. "Cassius" is in business in the City, twenty years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, hair also between colours, and respectably connected.

NO NAME is a candidate for the marriage state. She is rather above the middle height, nineteen years of age, of dark complexion, has black wavy hair, black eyes, eyebrows, and eyelashes, small mouth, and very white teeth; has £100 a year, and "great expectations" on the death of a maiden aunt, who is now seventy years of age. Respondents must be highly respectable; and *carter* to be exchanged.

A. CONSTANT READER, twenty years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, with dark complexion, blue eyes, light hair, and a good set of teeth, who is very fond of reading, and a bass singer in a choir, would like to correspond with some young lady possessing a loving disposition, and who is fond of music.

A. D.—The magna charta, or great charter, was signed by King John in 1215, and confirmed by his successor, Henry III. It is reported to have been chiefly drawn up by the Earl of Pembroke and Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury. Its most important articles are those which provide that no freeman shall be taken, or im-

prisoned, or proceeded against, "except by the lawful judgement of his peers, or by the law of the land," and that no scatage or aid should be imposed in the kingdom (except certain feudal dues from tenants of the Crown), unless by the Common Council of the Kingdom. The remaining and greater part of it was directed against abuses of the king's power as feudal superior.

CHARLES STUART, twenty-one years of age, 6 ft. in height, with black hair, whiskers, and moustache, cheerful, good-tempered, and good-looking, having an income of £200 a year, and possessing more than enough means to make a comfortable home, is anxious to meet with a young lady who will share it with him as his wife.

LIZZIE S. M., who is considered extremely good-looking, and has brown eyes, brown hair, is twenty-one years of age, good-tempered, and the daughter of a highly-respectable tradesman, wishes to correspond with some young gentleman to whom these preliminary particulars may be satisfactory.

T. M. C.—Your handwriting is very good and clerklke, and would qualify you for the situation which you seek. But why not stay in the "old country"? We are amazed that Irishmen still place their hopes in the Northern States of America where they have always been met with "the cold shoulder," and are only desired at present as good food for powder. Are there to be no more Irishmen left in Ireland?—and is the fair land now about to become the real "Nobles of nations" by the loss of her best and bravest?

R. D.—Not specially. In fortification the redan is a kind of rampart, in advance of the principal works to defend the least protected parts. It usually consists of a rampart of earth, and it is the simplest kind of field fortification.

G. P.—The term is involved in great obscurity. Milton speaks of

The Dorian mood

Of flutes and soft recorders.

The recorder, however, had a peculiarly pleasing tone, somewhat resembling the flageolet, and was much used in this country.

NELLIE.—We may remind you that "still waters run deep," and that now as of old time, "The heart of man is desperately wicked." To profess love to you and avow love for another who is married, is, we should think, quite sufficient to indicate the character of your quiet-seeming admirer. You will, in our opinion, exercise a sound discretion in having "nothing to do with him."

F. COREY wishes to correspond matrimonially with a young and pretty country girl, who must be well educated and accomplished, and have no scruples to go to the opera occasionally, as he is passionately fond of music. He is of good family, but has not a very good income at present, although expecting to have in a year or two. Is not very tall nor very handsome, but passable and under twenty-four; and is not particular whether the lady is a year or two older.

ASTRA.—We cannot tell when the science of astrology took its rise—probably it is as old as the advent of man himself—but no one now believes in the revelation of the stars. Yet we all consider them still to be "the poetry of heaven"; and

"If in their bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great
Our destinies o'erleap our mortal state
And claim a kindred with them; for they are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life—have named them—
selves a star."

W. F. H.—Never build after you are five-and-forty; have five years' income in hand before you lay a brick; and always calculate the expense at double the estimate given to you.

H. M. J.—Your character seems to resemble certain bodies in chemistry—which are very good, perhaps, in themselves, yet fly off and refuse the least conjunction with others.

REGINALD CONVERS, who is isolated from the society of the gentler sex, desires to obtain an introduction to a lady wishing to marry. He is twenty-one, in height 5 ft. 9 in., has brown curly hair, is a gentleman by birth and education, and considered handsome. The young lady should be pretty, ladylike, of an amiable disposition, and from seventeen to twenty years of age. Money no object.

W. J. M., who has an income of £270 per annum, is very desirous of forming the acquaintance of a young lady with a view to matrimony. Is twenty-seven years of age, height 5 ft. 9 in., has black hair and moustache, and considered very good-looking. The lady should be tall and a good housewife.

FRANCIS OSBORNE, who is fair, 5 ft. 11 in. in height, generally considered good-looking, and well educated, desires to bestow himself and £200 a year on a pretty Brunette of eighteen.

IRISH BRUNETTE, who "hates the idea of dying an old maid," certifies all and sundry bachelors that she is just eighteen, has brown hair and eyes, pretty mouth, slight figure, of a lively disposition, well educated, and fully domesticated, with ample means.

A. HUNZ.—There are two distinct sorts of bashfulness—one is the awkwardness of youth and inexperience, let us say, for instance, the bashfulness of a hobbled boy, which a few steps into the world will convert into the impudence of the coxcomb; whilst the other springs from a consciousness which the most delicate feelings produce, and the most extensive knowledge cannot always remove.

S. T.—The true reformer is he who creates new institutions, and gives them life and energy, and trusts to them for throwing off such evil humours as may be lying in the body politic. The real reformer is the seminal reformer, not the radical; he who goes forth to sow fresh seeds of goodness, and not he who rashly uproots what was already existing.

NEERA.—If you say he is ungrateful, you can impute to him nothing more detestable. Thousands of the brave, the gifted, and the beautiful, have waked from such dreams of juvenile idolatry amid the cold realities of every-day life, and loathed the long remnant of a scarce budding existence for the rash vows of its opening dawn. The world is peopled

with such mourners; and if in time the cloak of indifference or of resignation, or the pall of despair, shroud it from the general gaze, the broken heart is not the less surely there.

H. G. J.—When sent to table, the eyes are generally left out; but whether they are allowed to remain in or are taken out, is pretty much a matter of fancy.

BLANCHE D'IVRY.—The only reply we need make to your long letter is simply this—Innocence and mysteriousness never dwell long together.

J. R. S. and G. C. J.—You could not emigrate on the terms you mention. Your best course will be to apply to the Government Commissioners for Emigration.

R. M. A.—Apply at the office of the Commissioners, Scotland Yard, where you will be supplied with a form containing all the necessary particulars.

A. YOUTH.—The affection of which you complain arises from nervousness. It will disappear as you grow older, or mix more in society.

WALTER BELMONT.—There is very little probability that you will grow any taller. If you are not in a position to marry, by all means wait until you are; marriage without money is madness.

E. L.—As a birthday present, we can suggest nothing better than VOL. I. OF THE LONDON READER. The price is 6d.

CONSTANCE BEVERLY.—The young gentleman to whom you have been introduced, who never enters into conversation with you, is evidently much impressed by your attractions, and possibly loves you; and—

Silence in love bewrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty;
A beggar that is dumb, you know,
Doth challenge double pity.

UNCERTAINTY.—There are 26 numbers in each volume of THE LONDON READER. We cannot say whether it is possible to invent a machine to solve, by its continual working, the problem of perpetual motion; but should suppose that the making of such a machine and the finding of the philosopher's stone would occur about the same time—i.e., at the Green calends.

A. R. C., who designates himself as a forlorn bachelor, thirty years of age, 6 feet high, and having an income of £300 a year, desires to find a lady who, as his wife, after business hours would by her sweetnes make him forget at home the anxieties of active life. She need not bring any money, but must have a loving heart, free from any engagements.

ADOLPH, twenty-two years of age, with light brown, curly hair, blue eyes, Roman nose, small mouth, good teeth, height 5 ft. 10 in., and of sober and domesticated habits, is anxious to place himself and an income of £200 a year (with very good prospects) at the disposal of some young lady who will accept him "for better or worse."

ADA and JESSELLA are ready to take upon themselves the duties of wives. "Ada" is fair, with flaxen hair, has blue eyes, fair complexion, is 5 ft. in height, and generally considered pretty; age nineteen. "Jesella" is tall and dark, has black hair and eyes, and is very good-looking; age eighteen. Neither young lady would undertake to make the experiment of matrimony on less than £200 per annum.

CATHERINE R. anxiously seeks a swain, who must be not less than twenty-six, and need not be good-looking, but must have a good heart and an expressive countenance; has no money, but is thoroughly domesticated, fond of home, and extremely affectionate.

COMMUNICATION RECEIVED.—"Orpheus" is anxious to hear further from Mnemosyne and all the other young ladies who have responded to him; "Orpheus" evidently considering that as his fair platonian correspondents would not "much encumber" He prefers to have them in the plural number."

"Charles Herbert" is charmed with the description "Sappho" gives of herself. His position is that of a barrister, with an independent income. Is tall and dark; age twenty-eight. "J. W." is anxious to exchange *carter-de-visite* with "Alice." "Gertrude" would like to correspond with "Xerxes." Is of lively disposition, of business habits; has dark hair, grey eyes, and a loving heart. "W. Hanwell" offers himself to "Sappho." He is of middle height, has light brown hair, blue eyes, is nineteen years of age, can play the piano and other instruments, and is most respectably connected. (The tale has not been published in THE LONDON READER). "Amy" would like to hear from "George Egerton," of Crewe. Is 5 ft. 3 in., fair complexion, blue eyes, bright auburn hair, is thoroughly domesticated, and has received a good, plain education. (Handwriting good; colour of hair as stated above). "Harry S. M." will be happy to correspond with "Emily," of "sweet seventeen," to whom he offers a warm heart, a comfortable income and home, and a name of good standing. "Alberto" would very much like to correspond with "Sappho," whom he thinks he would suit in every respect, being of good family and connections, good-looking, and well to do. "Alberto" would like to exchange *carter-de-visite*. "Snowdrop" would be happy to correspond with "Charles E. Stanley." She is fair-complexioned, medium height, most loving disposition, was twenty-first birthday, and would, she believes, make a nice little wife. She would like to see "C. E. S."s" *carter-de-visite*. "Albert de Vere" also replies to "Sappho," and states that he is fair, age nineteen, and height 5 ft. 9 in.

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Of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

PART 12, VOL. II.—MAY, 1864.

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